

PCB's cause

FROM PAGE 13  
Sharjah and Dhaka, which now meet ICC standards to host Tests, are also being considered as venues for a Pakistan-Australia series.

"It's unfortunate that Pakistan cricket is suffering but you can't blame any team for having reservations on security because Pakistan is declared a war zone," said former Pakistan captain turned politician Imran Khan.

"Two English players refused to tour India which is more safer than Pakistan, so you can't help it," Khan told AFP.

"Although I think it's safe to play in Pakistan international teams will not be easily convinced," he said.

But another former national captain, Intikhab Alam, said Pakistan should play on neutral venues.

"Unfortunately circumstances are such that Pakistan will have to play its matches on neutral venues like Sharjah or Dhaka," Alam said.

"The PCB has to earn revenues through series and if the Pakistan team don't play, where will they earn money," he said.

What to watch

- FROM PAGE 13
- ESPN**
    - Serie A highlights 12:00 am
    - Cricket Super selector October winners 7:00 am and 6:30 pm
    - India v South Africa First Test highlights 8:30 am
    - Goals! 9:30 am and 6:00 pm
    - Fulham v West Ham English Premiership Repeat at 11:00 am
    - Chiievo v Venezia Serie A Repeat at 4:00 pm
    - Western Union World Football 8:00 pm
    - Sportscenter Hindi**
      - Live at 8:30 pm
      - World Cup Mix
      - Football Magazine 9:00 pm
    - STAR Sports**
      - Australia v New Zealand First Test, Day 1 Live at 5:57 am
      - Sportline Today Sports News 8:00 am and 1:00 pm
      - Liverpool v Man United English Premiership Recorded at 1:30 pm
      - Sportline Tonight**
        - Sports News Live at 8:00 pm
        - Australia v New Zealand First Test, Day 1 Highlights at 9:30 pm
        - Harsha Online Cricket Talk Show 11:00 pm

Lankans lash out at Akhtar



AP, Colombo

Pakistan's fast bowler Shoaib Akhtar has come in for sharp criticism from Sri Lankan cricket commentators for an invective he allegedly hurled on a Sri Lankan batsman during a limited-over tournament in Sharjah, United Arab Emirates.

Akhtar, one of the world's fastest bowlers, was seen gesticulating and heard using the invective against Mahela Jayawardena after getting his wicket in the final of the three-nation Khaleej Times Trophy on Sunday.

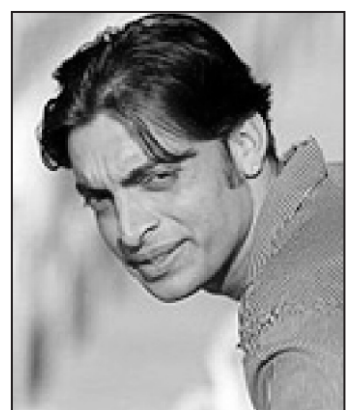
Sri Lanka lost the final to Pakistan by five wickets. "Akhtar's poor behaviour," ran a headline in the state-run Daily News on Tuesday.

"Fast bowlers all over the world are temperamental as they come. And it was no different with Akhtar," said Elmo Rodrigopulle, writing in Daily News.

Akhtar seemed upset when Jayawardena hit his bouncer for a six.

"Akhtar's response for the first-ball six was a four-letter word which was obvious to everyone

watching the game on TV," Rodrigopulle said. "And then when he dismissed Jayawardena, he (Akhtar) poured more scorn on the batsman, muttering obviously more four-letter words which Jayawardena did well to ignore.



SHOAIB AKHTAR

showing that he is not from the wild west."

Rodrigopulle said Akhtar must at all times endeavour to maintain his reputation.

"This type of behaviour was uncalled for from Akhtar. Akhtar no doubt is any crowd's darling. His

every move on the field comes in for applause. The moment his captain brings him on to bowl, the crowd welcomes him with loud cheers because he immediately brings the game to life," Rodrigopulle said.

"To besmirch his reputation is not what is expected. Maybe he threw himself to the deep end unable to stomach the excellent hook shot played by Jayawardena," he said.

Chandra Ratnayake, another cricket commentator, said organisers should take notice of such behaviour and punish the offender.

"If players get away with such nonsense, then more bad time for cricket is not far away," he said.

Rodrigopulle blamed Sri Lanka for its lacklustre performance in Sharjah's final.

"The batsmen played like novices. They could muster only 173 giving their bowlers no chance whatsoever of bundling out the strong Pakistani batting line-up," he wrote.

Sri Lankan cricketers arrived from Sharjah Monday and soon go into another Test and one-day series against the West Indies.

The first Test against West Indies starts November 13.

Aussies' tough time ahead



REUTERS, Brisbane

Refreshed and revitalised after their comprehensive Ashes win over England, Australia's cricketers are preparing for another big challenge to their status as world champions.

Steve Waugh's all-conquering players confirmed their position as world leaders in both Test and limited-overs cricket with their performances last season, but face a potentially more difficult assignment at home this summer.

Their domestic programme begins with a tricky three-Test series against Trans-Tasman rivals New Zealand followed by a three-Test clash against South Africa, who can overtake Australia at the top of the Test rankings with a series win.

The three teams will then square off in a month-long triangular one-day series that could provide an early clue into their chances at the 2003 World Cup.

The main interest centres around the Test series with South Africa but the Australians have been careful not to underestimate the Kiwis.

"The form the Australian team is in at the moment is probably as

good as it has ever been," Australian leg-spinner Shane Warne said.

"But this team won't be getting complacent and that's something we don't even talk about now because it just doesn't happen."

The series against New Zealand starts in Brisbane on Thursday, followed by Tests in Hobart (November 22-26) and Perth (November 30 -- December 4).

Australia beat the Kiwis 3-0 when they last met in New Zealand in 2000 and everything points to another Aussie win this time.

New Zealand have not won a series for more than a year but Waugh said they were a better team than their recent record suggested.

"New Zealand play it tough and they're very competitive. They certainly say a bit out in the middle and it's good to play against those guys," Waugh said.

"We had a good series against them not long ago and they've got a lot more experience than people give them credit for. Their batsmen have been around a while and they've got some good bowlers so I expect it to be a good series."

While some teams buckle under the pressure of playing the star-studded Australians, the Kiwis have a habit of raising their game against their great rivals.

Although beaten 3-0 in their last series, the Kiwis were in a position to win at least one of those Tests but failed to take their chance.

They came to Australia earlier than scheduled after their tour of Pakistan was postponed because of security concerns and have been boosted with the return from injury of Chris Cairns, Dion Nash and Daniel Vettori, all big-match players.

"Guys have been busting their gut to get back for this tour. We want to give them a bloody good scrap," New Zealand captain Stephen Fleming said.

The series against South Africa starts in Adelaide (Dec 14-18), followed by the Boxing Day Test in Melbourne (Dec 26-30) and the New Year's Test in Sydney (Jan 2-6).

Australia are currently top of the International Cricket Council's rankings but the Proteas can nose ahead if they win.

The teams, who played two epic encounters at the 1999 World Cup, are also unofficially ranked first and second in the one-day game.

Australian Cricket Board chairman Bob Merriman said South Africa posed a real threat to Australia's place at the top of the rankings.

"The form book suggests South Africa is the side closest to Australia in the current standings, so this season's match-up will go a long way to determining which country is regarded as the best in the world," Merriman said.

Pak inquiry wants Bacher to testify

REUTERS, Karachi

Former South African cricket head Ali Bacher has been asked to present any information of alleged match-fixing by Pakistan cricketers at the 1999 World Cup to a Pakistani judicial commission.

"We have sent a letter to Dr Bacher asking him to come and share with the commission any information he has on the suspicions he has raised on the World Cup matches," Kazim Ali Malik, the commission registrar, told this news agency.

The inquiry, headed by Justice Karamat Bhandari, has been ordered by the Pakistan government to investigate allegations that two matches at the 1999 World Cup in Britain involving Pakistan were fixed. Pakistan lost both matches to Bangladesh and India.

Bacher, executive director for the 2003 World Cup to be hosted by South Africa, said last year that Majid Khan, former chief executive of the Pakistan Cricket Board, had told him of his suspicions of the results.

Four senior players, Waqar Younis, Inzamamul Haq, Saeed Anwar and Moin Khan, have told the inquiry the two matches, as well as Pakistan's losing final against Australia, were not fixed.

New worry

FROM PAGE 13  
security official to stay with the team the entire time," added O'Gorman.

"This would enable that official employing someone he trusts to carry out reconnaissance work for areas the team is due to travel to."

The demands are sure to increase the financial penalties onto the ECB, who normally rely on the home nation to provide security while top officials like chairman Lord MacLaurin or chief executive Tim Lamb normally fly out for one Test each.

Despite the nature of the PCA's demands, though, the ECB remain confident of satisfying them in the next few days and are believed to have already begun interviewing for a security officer.

ANOC award for Zafar

BSS, Dhaka

Secretary-general of the Bangladesh Olympic Association (BOA) Zafar Imam has been selected for the Merit Ward of the Association of the National Olympic Committee (ANOC), according to a message received here yesterday.

The ANOC, in a letter addressed to the BOA president, said, "The members of the ANOC Executive Council decided to confer the ANOC Merit Award to BOA secretary general Zafar Imam for his most valuable contribution to the Olympic Movement."

Belgium Fed Cup favourites



AFP, Madrid

The absence of two-time defending champions the United States from the Fed Cup finals which get underway here Wednesday has thrown the field open for other nations to grab the top team title in women's tennis.

The decision of the Americans to stay away because of security risks leaves the event without five of the top ten players in the world - Jennifer Capriati, Lindsay Davenport, Venus Williams, Monica Seles and Serena Williams.

In their absence Belgium have the highest number of top ten players with teens Justine Henin and Kim Clijsters the key players to beat in the November 7-11 tournament at the Parque Ferial Juan Carlos I.

Eighteen-year-old French Open finalist Clijsters, ranked number five, and 19-year-old Wimbledon finalist Henin, sixth, will be spearheading Belgium's bid for a first ever Fed Cup crown.

Belgium kicks off their campaign in the opening Pool B tie on Centre Court against Germany, replacements for the United States.

Germany have won the title twice and been runners-up three times, but are without top player Anke Huber who has announced her retirement.

The French are also challengers to come away with their second crown after last winning at home in Nice in 1997 with world number nine Amelie Mauresmo leading their challenge.

And in a sign that Guy Forget's players mean business, all have been forgiven and veteran Nathalie Tauziat has been recalled to the squad.

Tauziat had been out in the cold after writing a controversial book on women's tennis with the other French players refusing to play in the Sydney Olympics if the 34-year-old Tauziat was named.

A delighted Tauziat said that this was a great honour in her final season on the circuit.

"I've always loved playing for the French team. And for me everything that happened a year ago at

the time of the Olympic Games was more about jealousy and politics than sport.

"We've returned to real values," said the player from Bayonne.

"Everyone realised that at the end of the day we could achieve things together without liking each other 100 per cent," she added.

Russia will be minus the glamorous but out-of-form Anna Kournikova and the young squad includes Olympic silver-medallist Elena Dementieva, Elena Likhovtseva, Nadia Petrova and Elena Bovina.

The tournament will be played using a round-robin format within



Spain will heavily depend on Conchita (L) and Arantxa.

The United States have won the tournament a record 17 times since the event's inception in 1963 whitewashing Spain 5-0 last year in Las Vegas.

But the Spaniards are always tough competitors and have won five times out of eight finals between 1991 and 1998.

Given the home factor and playing on their favoured clay along with the experience of three-time French Open champion Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario and former Wimbledon champion Conchita Martinez could work for the Spanish.

Spain play Australia in their opening match Wednesday.

Australia are second only to the US in Fed Cup victories with seven in total, but have not won since 1974 and are considered outsiders here along with Argentina and the Czech Republic.

two pools with the nation finishing at the top of each pool going through to contest the final next Sunday.

Each tie played consists of three matches and each match will be the best of three sets.

The Fed Cup is the largest annual international team competition in women's sport with more than 100 nations having entered this year's event through the qualifying.

GROUPS

**Pool A:** Russia, France, Czech Republic and Argentina

**Pool B:** Belgium, Spain, Australia and Germany

Practice makes him perfect!



REUTERS, Bloemfontein

Lance Klusener headed for the nets and left reporters waiting in vain for quotes on his return to form with 108 for South Africa in the first Test against India on Monday.

Called to explain why Klusener was not available for comment after an innings which confirmed he had ended his wretched run with the bat, team manager Goolam Raja said the all-rounder had opted instead for extra practice.

"He (Klusener) hasn't refused (to talk to the media) outright," Raja said. "What he said to me is that he wants to hit balls and he's gone into the nets with Fordy (South African coach, Graham Ford).

"I know it's being unfair on you guys to say 'wait until they've finished the nets'. I don't think

that's ideal. But cricket is his core business and he feels he wants to go and have throw downs. It's very difficult for me as manager to say that he must go and do the interview first."

Klusener passed up the opportunity to talk about his innings on a day when there were well under a thousand spectators in Goodyear Park, indicating the problem Test cricket can have in attracting support.

Although there is no specific clause in the South African players' contracts that demands they make themselves available for interviews, Raja appeared to admit that Klusener had failed to fulfil his obligations.

"Absolutely, you're talking to the converted," Raja said when asked if it was part of a player's responsibility to help market the game.

"But when a request is made by a player who wants to go and practice, it's very difficult for me to tell

him that his priority should be marketing."

Raja said the time had come for the United Cricket Board (UCB) of South Africa to include a clause in players' contracts. "This is a matter that I have to take up with the UCB, not only because of today but because the contract is too loose on this issue," he said.

Klusener has a long history of avoiding meeting with the press, even failing to appear for a media conference following his career best 174 against England in Port Elizabeth in the 1999-2000 Test series.

He was not the only player who failed to attend a news conference on Monday.

Paceman Jagavall Srinath, who became the only fifth Indian to claim 200 Test wickets when he dismissed Shaun Pollock in the morning session and finished with five for 140, spoke only briefly to television before going into the dressing room.

Melbourne Cup on

It's a horserace that stops a nation -- the Melbourne Cup attracts millions of viewers internationally, and has become the pre-eminent event in a carnival of horse racing at Melbourne's Flemington Racecourse, over November 3-10.

Emirates Airline is a major sponsor of the carnival and a keen supporter of this world class event which opened on November 3 with derby day, followed by Melbourne Cup Day (November 6), Oaks Day (November 8) and Emirates Stakes Day (November 10).

Emirates sponsors the Emirates Classic Race on Oaks Day and is also the naming rights sponsor of Emirates Stakes Day.

A feature of Emirates Stakes Day is the Emirates Airline Legends Race. Inaugurated last year, this has become a centrepiece of the Melbourne Cup carnival and attracts the world's past champions for a rare opportunity to return to the track and compete against old rivals. Among those competing this year are Lester Piggott, Tony Cruz, Brent Thompson, Larry Olsen, Geoff Lewis and Linda Jones.

As well as attracting the world's finest horses, trainers and jockeys, the carnival brings together spectacular fashion, gourmet cuisine, and Australian and international entertainers and celebrities. More

than 352,000 people attend the Carnival each year.

Emirates will host over 600 guests in a stunning silk-lined marquee in the Bird Cage, the fondly-named social and exclusive VIP area providing the finest racing views to Australia's great race. This year the marquee has been designed by James Gordon, world-renowned Sydney interior designer.

Emirates guest this year will include Australia's corporate leaders and entertainers. With Emirates sponsoring November's Australian Film and Television Awards, among those who will be seen in the marquee will be many internationally acclaimed Australian actors including Oscar and AFI Award winning Geoffrey Rush (Shine), AFI Award winning Eric Bana (Chopper), Sibylla Budd (The Bank), and Sigrid Thornton (Seachange).

Mike Simon, Emirates' Corporate Communications Director said, "The Melbourne Cup carnival is a great Australian event and one that attracts interest and excitement all around the world.

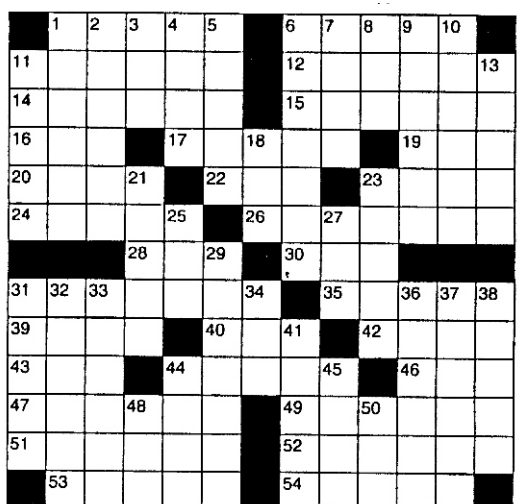
"We are proud to be part of it and to re-affirm our commitment to the sport of racing, which also includes the prestigious Singapore derby as well as major meetings at Newmarket, the Curragh and Longchamp."



Emirates chairman Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed al Maktoum (4th from R, back row) is seen with veteran jockeys who got back into the saddle to compete in last year's first running of the Emirates Airlines Legend Race.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

- ACROSS**
- 1 Tony territory
  - 6 Alternatives
  - 11 Steinway products
  - 12 Takes under one's wing
  - 14 Get the computer going again
  - 15 -- of dog
  - 16 Stick figure?
  - 17 "Garfield" cartoonist
  - 19 White House monogram
  - 20 Saharan
  - 22 Crib
  - 23 Voucher
  - 24 Puzzle-page favorites
  - 26 BBs
  - 28 Twitch
  - 30 Reason to keep playing
  - 31 Flair
- DOWN**
- 1 -- Madre
  - 2 City in Iran
  - 3 "Can I take that as --?"
  - 4 Suitable
  - 5 Cornerstone
  - 6 D.C. advisers
  - 7 Keatsian output
  - 8 Sad
  - 9 Arizona native
  - 10 Narrow channel
  - 11 Tourney type
  - 13 Member-ships
  - 18 Somebody
  - 21 Coup --
  - 23 Understandable
  - 25 Bracketed word
  - 27 Steven Tyler's daughter
  - 29 Hire
  - 31 -- Got a Brand New Bag"
  - 32 Strong dislike
  - 33 Character
  - 34 Previous to
  - 36 "Ed Wood" Oscar winner
  - 37 Way out
  - 38 Weepy
  - 41 Alghani-stan's capital
  - 44 Type of blocker
  - 45 Carte
  - 48 Journey segment
  - 50 Teachers' org.
- Solution time: 23 mins.**
- GOADS COGNIS  
ALLOTT LITE ART  
BIELLA ALTOVER  
TEMPUS BIANE  
GEO PAD BELLEN  
ELLA PESTO  
MIDOLE PANAMA  
HARPO GILAD  
ABBEY RIO LELO  
BEARS BIKERS  
ALLEARS LOTUS  
STILL RITO OSAKA  
HEIS MEIN WARREIS



CRYPTOQUIP

V S O I M S X R D O O E C W  
Z I D M X S F O Y E R U K T B T M I C E ,  
V S B S M R T E C Z I D U T J S

S C I D W U S F V I Y M I I K .  
Yesterday's Cryptogram: I IMAGINE PHOTOGRAPHERS HAVE AN AVID INTEREST IN THE LATEST DEVELOPMENTS.  
Today's Cryptogram Clue: S equals E

The Cryptogram 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.