

Lara, Murali top Test ratings

REUTERS, London
Latest PricewaterhouseCoopers Test ratings issued on Saturday after Pakistan's victory over Bangladesh on Friday:

TOP BATSMEN

Player	Average
B Lara	50.49
S Tendulkar	57.96
M Hayden	47.58
A Flower	53.55
M Jayawardene	48.72
S Waugh	50.82
J Kallis	47.93
Inzamam	47.53
Langer	44.85
Martyn	54.34

TOP BOWLERS

Muralitharan	23.53
McGrath	22.00
Pollock	20.72
Donald	22.10
Waqaar	22.61
Gough	27.57
Saqlain	28.75
Warne	26.72
Cairns	28.91
Gillespie	25.37

Bharti says, no cricket with Pakistan

AFP, Calcutta
India will not play cricket with arch-rivals Pakistan until Islamabad takes concrete steps to stop "cross-border terrorism," a top Indian minister said here on Saturday.
"The government will not allow any cricket with Pakistan until it takes appropriate measures to wipe out cross-border terrorism," said sports minister Uma Bharati.
"The decision not to play against Pakistan is a collective one of various ministries," she said.
There is no upcoming match between the arch rivals, but India has repeatedly refused to play Pakistan, whom it accuses of backing "cross-border terrorism" in the disputed state of Kashmir.
India last year refused to play against Pakistan at Lahore in the Asian Test championship, also featuring Sri Lanka and Bangladesh.
India had also cancelled their scheduled tour of Pakistan in December 2000.
They also pulled out of the Sharjah one-day series in the Gulf last April because of Pakistan's presence.
India last played a Test in Pakistan in 1989.

Rajshahi rout

FROM PAGE 13

Mustard mot out	20
Mahabub c Anisul b Debabrot	4
Nayan not out	10
Extras: (lb-3, nb-1, w-2)	6
Total: (For 2 wickets in 10.1 overs) 42	
Fall of wickets: 1-2, 2-10	

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Debabrot	4	0	18	2
Safiuddin	4	0	12	0
Suja	1.1	1	3	0
Sabbir	1	0	6	0

Result: Rajshahi won by eight wickets.

Nations Cup All depends on Kanu



AFP, Bamako
Nwankwo Kanu's chances of spearheading Nigeria's opening African Nations Cup clash are hanging in the balance, with the Arsenal star battling to be fit for Monday's Group A game against Algeria.
Kanu, who hooked up with the Super Eagles later than planned because of Premiership commitments with the Gunners, is trying to shake off a slight knee injury.
Earlier reports said the former African footballer of the year would definitely miss the Group A game against the Algerians, but Nigeria coach Shaibu Amodu said Friday there was still a chance Kanu would play.
"We can't say for sure what will happen with Kanu," Amodu told AFP. "We're still trying to see whether he will be fit. We have to

wait and see," he added.
Either way Amodu was anxious to play down the significance of Kanu's injury. Nigeria's Group A opponents Mali and Liberia get the



NWANKWO KANU
tournament underway when they meet in Bamako on Saturday.
"We don't like to put emphasis on one player. We believe that the whole squad is equally capable and

that all are able to start in the team and acquit themselves well," he said.
Nigeria are one of the favourites for this year's African Nations Cup but Amodu is unfazed by the pressure that goes with coaching the Super Eagles.
"We have a reputation for doing well and that's understandable," said Amodu, adding that he did not feel he had anything to prove. "I am not aware that this tournament is a test case for me or anything like that."
Amodu only took over as coach of Nigeria in April last year and is the latest occupant of one of the hottest coaching seats in African football.
Yet the notorious volatility of the position does not worry the coach, and he has set his sights on being the only African coach at this year's World Cup, when his team faces England, Argentina and Sweden.
"Ideally I'd like to see more African teams have African coaches," Amodu said.

Nations Cup Senegal fearless



AFP, Bamako
Senegal striker Al-Hadji Diouf believes his team have nothing to fear in the African Nations Cup ahead of Sunday's 'Group of Death' showdown with Egypt.
African footballer of the year candidate Diouf said the biggest threat to Senegal's chances of victory in the 16-team fiesta, which kicks off here Saturday, would come from within and not from their opponents.
"We are our biggest enemy," Diouf told journalists prior to the opener in Group D, which also includes Tunisia and Zambia.
"If we train well and prepare properly, the Nations Cup could be as easy for us as the World Cup qualifiers," the 21-year-old attacker said, referring to Senegal's suc-

cessful passage to the finals in Japan and South Korea.
"Our objective is clear and sharp: to win. It's essential," added Diouf, who plays his football with French league leaders Lens.
Diouf, nicknamed 'serial killer' for his clinical marksmanship in front of goal, has been mobbed by fans since arriving in Mali from neighbouring Senegal.
Thousands of supporters turned up to watch the 'The Teranga Lions' in a training session at the Modibo Keita Stadium on Friday evening, but Diouf is not letting the adulation go to his head.
"Sure Al-Hadji scores goals; but Senegal's star is collective," he said.
Meanwhile Egypt coach Mahmoud al-Gohary has told his players to beware the threat posed by Diouf in Sunday's game.
While talent is sprinkled liberally throughout Senegal's ranks al-Gohary is in no doubt that their

striker is the pick of the bunch.
"We must mark Diouf very closely," the former Army colonel warned. "He's in great form at the moment and is one of the best players in Africa. We have to watch out," al-Gohary told AFP.
Egypt's preparations have been disrupted by the 'will he, won't he' status of veteran striker Hossam Hassan, who according to reports in Cairo will not play in Mali because of injury.
But al-Gohary is holding out hope that the 35-year-old veteran may yet play a part in Egypt's Nations Cup campaign in the second phase.
"At the moment he definitely will not play in any of our group matches," al-Gohary said. "But he still might play in the second round if we get through," he added.
The African Nations Cup gets underway later Saturday when hosts Mali face Liberia in the opening game.

AUSSIE OPEN NOTES

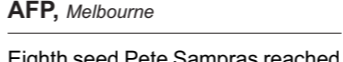


AFP, Melbourne
Venus Williams comes in for criticism for not playing more tournaments but the Wimbledon and US Open champion says there is a very simple reason. "I think that, really, my schedule really just mirrors my personality. Lots of players are able to play quite a few matches. But if I did just one thing in my life I would be terribly bored," she says.
RIOS WEIGHS INTO WOMEN
Macho Chilean star Marcelo Rios had little good to say about women's tennis when asked Saturday why

the fairer sex had avoided the seeding carnage that had devastated the men's draw.
"I always say that men's tennis is too tough," Rios said. "It's not like girls where they win one and love until they're in the quarters. Yesterday I saw a match - (Martina) Hingis and, I don't know, a German girl (Barbara Rittner) - that was 6-0, 6-1 and that starts the fourth round. "It's like a joke and in men's that's not going to happen - everyone is tough."
SWEDES LOVE ENGLISH CHALLENGE
Jonas Bjorkman sees his clash with Tim Henman on Sunday as the first of a mouth-watering treble between Sweden and England.

The fourth round clash precedes the Davis Cup first round match between the two countries in Birmingham in February.
After that comes a World Cup soccer clash in the 2002 finals in June.
"It's great, in't it," said the 29-year-old Swede whose hometown soccer club is Hammarby.
BEST OF BRITISH
Timothy Henry Henman's tennis credentials are difficult to better.
His grandfather Henry Billington played at Wimbledon, reaching the third round in 1948 and again in 1950 and 1951.
His great-grandmother, Ellen Stawell Brown, was the first woman to serve overarm at Wimbledon in 1901.
FLIP SIDE
Sporting stars spend the vast majority of their time either training or competing. But there is also the opportunity for outside activities, and on the tennis tour the men's and women's players' guides give an insight, at times serious and at times comical, into their interests and hobbies.
But few would match those included by Slovakia's Dominik Hrbaty.
The talented Hrbaty, from Bratislava but resident in Montiz Smylie. Stubbs has two, including the 2000 Australian with Jared Palmer.
Stubbs and Lisa Raymond are seeded first here in women's doubles. They won at Wimbledon and the US Open last year and at the Australian in 2000.
India's Mahesh Bhupathi and Leander Paes, the 1999 French Open and Wimbledon and 2001 French men's doubles champions, went out in the second round here, losing 6-3, 6-4 to Frenchmen Michael Llorda and Fabrice Santoro.
They were seeded third, behind Woodbridge-Bjorkman and the pair of Palmer and Donal Johnson, who won at Wimbledon last year.
GREG'S GRADE
Greg Rusedski, still looking for his first Grand Slam title, has an exact idea how much he can improve his game 20 per cent.
Rusedski was upset over line calls after losing 6-4, 6-3, 1-6, 6-3 to British compatriot Tim Henman in the Australian Open's third round Friday night.
But looking ahead, he said, "I don't think we've seen the best of my tennis."
He said he and coach Sven Groeneveld agreed that "there is a minimum of 20 per cent improvement, especially on the returns," that Rusedski can make.
Rusedski was runner-up to Patrick Rafter in the 1997 US Open.
"I've been through Grand Slam finals already," he said. "I know what it takes."

Sampras survives

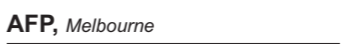


AFP, Melbourne
Eighth seed Pete Sampras reached the fourth round at the Australian Open here Sunday after a tremendous battle with French 30th seed Nicolas Escude who saved six match points.
The 30-year-old American won 7-6 (7/5), 5-7, 6-4, 6-7 (6/8), 6-3 in three hours 50 minutes and now faces Marat Safin, the Russian ninth seed, who beat him in the 2000 US Open final.
Safin, who lost the re-match with Sampras in last year's US Open semi-finals, progressed with a straight sets win over compatriot Mikhail Youzhny Saturday.
The 25-year-old Escude let slip three break points in the 11th game of the first set and then dropped the tie-breaker 5-7 but he took the second set when Sampras double-faulted to give the Frenchman two set points.
Sampras was unable to pick up Escude's great return off his feet and the Frenchman levelled at 1-1.
A single service break gave Sampras a 2-1 lead but Escude, the 1998 semi-finalist here who has come back from two sets down five times in previous Grand Slam matches, refused to lie down.
He exchanged breaks of service with Sampras in the fourth set which went to another tie-breaker and then saved three match points before sneaking home 8-6 to level the match.
Sampras then won the first four games of the fifth set but only clinched victory after Escude had saved another three match points in the eighth game of the fifth set.
The American finally settled the match with his 33rd ace.
"He's a very talented player, he's got all the shots and it was a tough match," Sampras said afterwards.
"I'm going to enjoy this for about five minutes and then think about the next match. It doesn't get any easier."
The win put an end to Escude's four-match winning run in Melbourne.

Ian vocal against rotation system

AFP, Brisbane
Former Australian wicketkeeping great Ian Healy has called for a temporary halt to the country's system of rotating players in the current 190,000 dollar (95,000 US) tri-nation one-day cricket contest.
This would enable selectors to establish which players in the limited-overs squad were seriously out of form, he argued here Saturday.
Healy urged the retention of 11 players for three successive matches so selectors could accurately gauge which changes were needed.
"We must show faith in form players of the recent past, then we know whether they have lost their shine," he said.
"Do the job for three matches, or don't play - that's the way to go," he said.
"Then they are not getting the soft option of being rotated, they get dropped."

Rios, Federer on course



AFP, Melbourne
Moody Chilean Marcelo Rios and Switzerland's Roger Federer underlined their claims to the Australian Open title on Saturday.
The 26-year-old Rios, whose fall from grace after a brief climb to the top of the men's game started after losing the 1998 final here to Petr Korda, appears to have refound his

play 23rd seed Nicolas Lapentti from Ecuador, the 1999 semifinalist who came back from two sets down to beat Gaston Gaudio of Argentina in a four-hour marathon.
Federer, who last year stopped Pete Sampras from matching Bjorn Borg's run of five consecutive Wimbledon titles, was forced to work hard to beat Germany's Rainer Schuettler 7-6 (8/6), 7-6 (7/5), 6-4.
Rios and Federer should meet in the quarterfinals on their way to a potential semifinal with Sampras.

fourth round.
Haas, a semifinalist here in 1999, ground down Martin of the United States for a 6-7 (6/8), 6-3, 3-6, 6-4, 6-1 victory in three hours 40 minutes on a hot Melbourne day.
Marat Safin of Russia, the ninth seed, downed Youzhny 6-4, 6-4, 6-4 and will play either eighth-seeded Pete Sampras or French Davis Cup hero Nicolas Escude in the fourth round on Monday.
Nicolas Lapentti knows a thing about five-set comebacks at the Australian Open and he rated Saturday's recovery as among his best.
Ecuador's No.1 overcame stifling heat to fight back from two sets down to vanquish Argentina's Gaston Gaudio 4-6, 5-7, 6-4, 6-2, 6-4 to set up another all-South American joust in the fourth round against Marcelo Rios.
Eleni Daniilidou of Greece, ranked 84 in the world, finally crumbled 6-2, 3-6, 6-1 to Capriati, who now plays Rita Grande of Italy.
Mauresmo, the 1999 finalist, admitted Thailand's Tamarine Tanasugarn had threatened to repeat her Wimbledon triumph of last year.
The seventh seed won the first three games and then went to sleep as the feisty Thai fought back to force a tiebreaker. Mauresmo could not be stopped after winning that and dropped only one more game to set up a fourth round match with Marlene Weingartner of Germany.
Weingartner punished 10th seeded Meghann Shaughnessy of the United States in an error-riddled match, winning 6-2, 3-6, 6-3.
Belgian Kim Clijsters looks like a good bet after winning her third match in under an hour. A clinical 6-1, 6-2 dismantling of Australian hopeful Cindy Watson meant the No.4 seed meets Slovakia's Janette Husarova, who beat Ai Sugiyama of Japan in straight sets.
Clijsters, dubbed 'Our Kim' by the Australian press courtesy of her relationship with Hewitt, was the first Belgian to reach a Grand Slam final when she lost to Jennifer Capriati at the French Open last year.
Her compatriot Justine Henin, who followed her lead to reach last year's Wimbledon final, plays another Australian, Nicole Pratt later Saturday.
The Belgian pair are scheduled to meet in the quarterfinals.



PHOTO: AFP
Chilean Marcelo Rios in action against Alberto Martin of Spain during their third round fixture of the Australian Open in Melbourne on Saturday.

fitness and racquet skills.
He ran Spain's Alberto Martin ragged for a 6-4, 6-3, 7-6 (7/3) win in two hours 19 minutes and will next

Tommy Haas of Germany came out on top of a marathon five set battle against veteran Todd Martin Saturday to book a place in the

Big guns ready to roll



AFP, Melbourne
Venus Williams might have a limp but few are betting against her as the Australian Open moves into the round of 16 on Sunday.
The US Open and Wimbledon champion had a stern workout against Slovak teenager Daniela Hantuchova in the third round and her troubled left knee held up well.
Another tough test comes Sunday in the form of Magdalena Maleeva, the 13th seed from Bulgaria who is vying to match the exploits of sisters Katerina and Manuela and reach an Australian Open quarter-final.
If Williams triumphs she has a potential last eight showdown with veteran Monica Seles who takes on Spain's Anabel Medina Garrigues.
The winner of that clash is likely to face off against three-time champion Martina Hingis who has been in sparkling form since her return from surgery for torn ankle ligaments.
The Swiss Miss, though, won't be taking her next round opponent, Amanda Coetzer lightly. The South African was a quarter-finalist last year and has twice made the last four.
"Anyone can go out there and beat you," said Hingis. "Amanda has, you know, picked up her game and I just have to go out there and do my business."
But Hingis, aiming for her sixth consecutive Australian Open final, is quick to acknowledge that Williams is the real threat.
"She's a great winner and I think she can always get out of trouble, and that's what makes her a champion," she said.
Hingis has benefited from Serena Williams' withdrawal. Serena was in the same side of the draw and Hingis is relieved she won't have to play both Williams sisters, as she did last year.
"When I saw the draw and there was Serena ... and maybe having to play the Williams sisters back-to-back again, I mean, that's just very difficult to do all the time," she said.
"But now I think the draw has opened up a bit."
Williams, chasing her first Australian crown, said after her third round match that the tendinitis in her knee felt much better.
"I feel well," she said. "I've got a good mom and a good trainer with me."
Maleeva will have to call on every one of her 12 years experience to derail the Williams bandwagon, but Venus, like Hingis, isn't getting ahead of herself.

"I think I'll have to hit a lot of balls. I think that's she's an older player, she plays more calculated tennis. She moves the ball around well and she's a really formidable opponent," she said.
"I can't expect her to give me anything. I'll just have to go out there and take something for myself."
Seles, who has won here four times but not since 1996, would dearly love to be this year's comeback queen.
She will likely get past Medina Garrigues but Williams will be a different story. And the 28-year-old veteran is trying to put that out of her mind.
"I just have to worry about my

next round opponent and try to improve my game," said the reserved American.
"You just try to do that each time. You just take each match on its own."
While the big guns dominate proceedings the Open is going to have at least one quarter-final newcomer.
Slovak Martina Sucha, 21 and ranked 66, has never been beyond the third round at any Grand Slam. Her opponent Adriana Serra Zanetta of Italy made the fourth round at Roland Garros in 1995 but has never been further.
The winner will meet Hingis or Coetzer.