

BD boys

FROM PAGE 13 expense of Zimbabwe thanks to a 62 run victory at the Hagley Oval...

After a delayed start due to rain Mendis was the cornerstone of Sri Lanka's 206 for nine with a crafted innings of 57.

Zimbabwe's reply got off to a solid start with opener Charles Coventry scoring 36 but leg-spinner Mendis and Sylvester combined to undermine their opponents.

Mendis bowled superbly to take 7-19 and Sylvester claimed eight dismissals including four stumpings...

In Group D, the West Indies, who along with Australia have qualified for the Super League...

Kenya were all out for just 114 with leg-spinner Ron Matthews wreaking the damage taking 4-17.

Donovan Pagon struck two sixes and seven fours in an unbeaten 63, and shared a 77 run second wicket partnership with Narsingh Deonarine...

The final day of the first round on Friday will see either Pakistan or Nepal fail to qualify for the Super League.

Pakistan need to beat England to ensure they do not end up having to play in the Plate competition with Nepal waiting to pip them into second spot...

In Group A South Africa take on Canada and in Group D Australia will be looking to make light work of Scotland in Dunedin.

The top two teams from each group will play in the Super League in Christchurch next week while the rest will battle it out for the Plate Championship in Auckland.

SCOREBOARD Scoreboard of the ICC Under-19 World Cup match between Bangladesh and India in Auckland on Thursday:

Table with columns: INDIA, M Bisla, c Aftab b Ashiqur, P Valthaty retired hurt, R Mohanty run out (Shariful), Y Patel c Ashraf b Al-Zabir, Y Rao lbw b Al-Zabir, M Mishra c Hasibul b Ashiqur, C Madan c sub (Shafiq) b Ashiqur, S Binny lbw b Ashraf, C Atram c Hasibul b Wassel, A Sharma c Ashraf b Murad, S Trivedi not out, Extras: (b-1, lb-6, w-8, nb-3), Total: (All out in 32.4 overs), Fall of wickets: 1-0, 2-11, 3-17, 4-22, 5-24, 6-31, 7-56, 8-56, 9-77, Bowler O M R W, Ashiqur 10 1 17 3, Al-Zabir 9 2 21 2, Shariful 2 0 10 0, Wassel 6 1 14 1, Arman 2 0 2 0, Ashraf 3 0 3 1, Murad 0.4 0 3 1

Table with columns: BANGLADESH, Aftab c Patel b Bisla, Salauddin c Binny b Trivedi, Hasibul c Mohanty b Atram, Ashraf c Mohanty b Trivedi, Iqbal c Patel b Trivedi, Shariful b Atram, Wassel b Bisla, Arman not out, Murad c Madan b Sharma, Ashiqur not out, Extras: (b-4, lb-5, w-14, nb-4), Total: (For 8 wks in 32.2 overs) 78, Did not bat: Shafiq Al-Zabir, Fall of wickets: 1-7, 2-34, 3-41, 4-50, 5-52, 6-52, 7-63, 8-64, Bowler O M R W, Trivedi 10 4 24 3, Atram 10 3 24 2, Bisla 6 4 13 2, Sharma 5 2 6 1, Binny 1.2 1 2 0, Result: Bangladesh won by 2 wickets.

Nasser being nostalgic



AFP, Madras

Nasser Hussain returns to his birthplace on Friday to lead England in the third one-day international against India...

"It is a huge game for me," said Hussain, who was born in this southern Indian city before migrating to England as a five-year-old in 1973 with his family.

"A lot of who I am, as a man and a cricketer, is down to my dad, Joe. It is a big match for me because it is such a big game for him.

"I am proud of what he has done for me, and as his roots come from Madras, I am proud to be back there."

The Hussain family is planning a celebratory dinner during the team's brief two-day stay in the city.

The England captain added, however, that his loyalty had never been divided.

"I have always been English," Hussain said. "I am proud of my roots, proud of my English side and proud of being England captain."

Hussain, whose team is dead-locked 1-1 in the six-match series, also praised Indian crowds and said the tourists had enjoyed the tour.

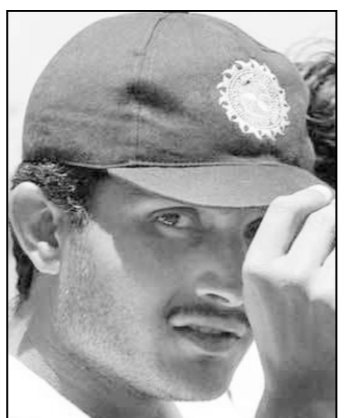
"Everywhere the team goes, people have been waving at us," he said. "There has been no booing. They clapped my 50s in Tests. They appreciate good cricket out there."

"They are just mad about (Sachin) Tendulkar, that's all."

Hussain said his team would continue to pressure the hosts in Friday's day-night match to gain the psychological advantage in the series.

England lost the opening day-night game at Calcutta by 22 runs, but came back strongly with a 16-run victory in the second match at Cuttack on Tuesday to level the series.

Fielding was the key to the tourists' success, running out three frontline Indian batsmen, Sachin Tendulkar, Venkatsai Laxman and Dinesh Mongia.



SOURAV GANGULY

"They (England) were far superior to India in the field," said former Indian batting great Sunil Gavaskar in a rare tribute to the Englishmen.

"India's running between wickets was awful. It was the lack of judgement of a run that was the worrying factor. India have a lot of problems to overcome and most of them are in the head."

One of the main problems for the hosts is skipper Sourav Ganguly's form.

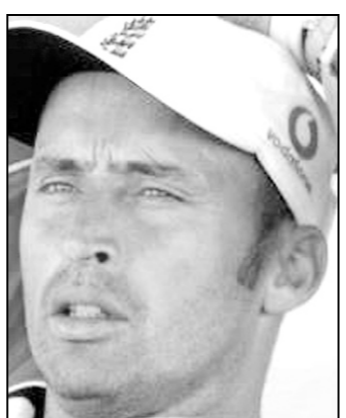
Ganguly, with just three half-centuries in his last 27 Test innings, has been struggling for runs for more than a year.

He hardly looked his best in the previous two matches against the tourists, scoring 42 and 14 before throwing away his wicket to rash strokes.

Both teams will name their playing elevens on Friday.

TEAMS

INDIA (from): Sourav Ganguly (captain), Sachin Tendulkar, Venkatsai Laxman, Virender Sehwag, Hemang Badani, Dinesh Mongia, Anil Kumble, Ajay Ratna, Harbhajan Singh, Sarandeep Singh, Jagavall Srinath, Ajit Agarkar, Zaheer Khan, Sanjay Bangar.



NASSER HUSSAIN

England (from): Nasser Hussain (captain), Andrew Caddick, Paul Collingwood, Andrew Flintoff, James Foster, Ashley Giles, Darren Gough, Matthew Hoggard, Ben Hollis, Nick Knight, Owais Shah, Jeremy Snape, Graham Thorpe, Marcus Trescothick, Michael Vaughan.

Umpires: Vijay Chopra and Devender Sharma (both Indians).

Flying Kiwi captain

AFP, Adelaide

New Zealand captain Stephen Fleming declared Thursday his team could no longer be described as a group of no-name players who were only occasionally capable of beating the world's best.

The increasingly confident skipper said while that may have been a fair assessment of past Kiwi teams, the current one -- which drew their Test series against Australia and are leading the one-day tri-nation series -- deserved more accolades.

"I think we've got a few names there who are quality players," Fleming said ahead of this weekend's double header against Australia and South Africa.

"In the past we've probably been bits and pieces, but I think we're getting a different type of player coming from New Zealand now who is more positive and confident, not one who is going to turn around and easily talk himself down."

His comments came after Australia's champion paceman Glenn McGrath said Wednesday New Zealand came into the summer as underdogs and lacked world-beaters.

"You look at the team and you don't think there are any world-beaters in there," he said.

"Maybe Chris Cairns could be classed in that category, but they all go out there and do their job and do it very well and that's what makes them a quality one-day team."

Shoaib goes

FROM PAGE 13

and BCB president Asghar, the visitors made the sporting decision to play after assurance of more security arrangements on the ground.

During the stoppage, BCB director Syed Ashraf Huq made an emotional speech to the crowd and urged them not to repeat such silly acts which might threaten Dhaka's status as an international cricket venue.

Hinds, 20, and 18-year-old Brown had been picked with an eye to the future.

Hooper said: "We've got an eye on the one-day games and a development for the 2003 World Cup. Hopefully, they will get a chance to show their value to the Caribbean public."

Hooper said he was keen to contribute runs himself to secure his position as skipper.

"The Pakistan tour is going to be a friendly one not only for the team but for myself," he said. "I want to score really, really heavily."

"I think it's very important that I do well and more or less lead from the front."

Hooper will also be able to call on batsman Shivnarine Chandepaul, leg-spinner Dinanath Ramanarine and quickie Cameron Cuffy, who all return after injury.

Experienced paceman Mervyn Dillon is also available again after being sent home from Sri Lanka for refusing to train because of security concerns.

The first Test starts in Sharjah on January 31.

'Ceremonies

FROM PAGE 13

1,000 back-up staff are expected to be required for the ceremonies, with 180 rehearsals taking place in the six months leading up to the tournament.

This keeps in line with the policy that South African companies given commercial opportunities through the World Cup must have a black empowerment element.

The two-hour opening ceremony, which will be held at the Newlands Cricket Ground in Cape Town on Saturday, February 8, will be broadcast live on television.

"It is our expressed hope that the television viewership worldwide will impact positively on our country because, among other things, we want tourism to benefit significantly from the opening ceremony and the World Cup."

The opening match, between South Africa and the West Indies, of the 54-match tournament will be played at Newlands on February 9.

The closing ceremony will take place at the Wanderers Stadium in Johannesburg immediately after the final on March 13.

When the Proteas began their Australian tour late last year, they were considered the most likely country to challenge Steve Waugh's champions for Test and one-day superiority.

But they are in danger of completing their mission with a reputation as being fragile mentally and physically.

However, Donald - who was sidelined for the three one-day losses with a chipped bone in the middle finger of his right (bowling) hand - says it is not too late to turn around the Proteas' fortunes before they return to South Africa for another three Tests against Australia.

"It's time for brave people to stand up and say: 'Listen, let's go and take these guys on,'" Donald says.

"We can still play good cricket. I feel sorry for people back home who have had to watch South Africa lose time and time again... it hurts."

"Things have gone horribly wrong, but we can still rescue this tour. We can still salvage it. But we are going to have to want it more than ever before."

Donald also appears to contradict statements made by teammate Jonty Rhodes, who claimed South Africa's rotation system had made it hard for players to gain momentum.

Euro 2004 draw today



AFP, Porto

Miracle man he may be, but Sven-Goran Eriksson's transformation of an England side from shambolic mess to World Cup contenders has come too late to impress the great and the good of European football.

When the draw for the qualifying rounds of Euro 2004 is made here on Friday, England will be seeded a lowly 17 - putting them into the second tier of seeds.

That means they could find themselves in the same group as defending world and European champions France, Sweden, whom they haven't beaten for 33 years, Italy or even bitter, old rivals Germany.

Those four countries are amongst the top seeds who are expected to dominate the 10 qualifying groups from which only one team is guaranteed a place in the finals here in two years time.

The other six top seeds, whose placings were based on performances in qualifying for, and taking part in, Euro 2000 and the 2002 World Cup, are Spain, the Czech Republic, the Republic of Ireland, Romania, Belgium and Turkey.

Even Russia, Croatia, Denmark, Netherlands, Yugoslavia and Poland have been elevated above the English in the Euro 2004 pecking order.

England could feel just a little peeved at their predicament.

Had the seedings followed the current FIFA world rankings, Eriksson's men would have been seeded five and could have been looking forward to a slightly more comfortable ride to what they hope will be a place in the final of the tournament in a rebuilt Stadium of Light in Lisbon on 2004.

Eriksson, the first foreigner to coach the England national team,

has enjoyed an impressive run since he took over from Kevin Keegan who resigned after losing to Germany in the opening qualifier for this year's World Cup finals.

Just one defeat in eight games is testament to the difference he has made - a series of results that eventually helped launch them into the World Cup finals in Japan and South Korea this summer.

Despite the expectations for this year, as well as the Euro 2004 campaign, the Swede is taking a long-term view of his role at the helm of the national side.

THE SEEDS

Seedings for the Euro 2004 qualifying competition, the draw for which takes place here on Friday:

TOP SEEDS - France (holders), Sweden, Spain, Czech Republic, Germany, Romania, Republic of Ireland, Italy, Belgium, Turkey.

SECOND SEEDS - Croatia, Russia, Yugoslavia, Holland, Denmark, Poland, England, Ukraine, Slovenia, Scotland.

THIRD SEEDS - Austria, Norway, Slovakia, Israel, Switzerland, Iceland, Bulgaria, Finland, Greece, Hungary.

FOURTH SEEDS - Cyprus, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Belarus, Wales, Estonia, Latvia, Northern Ireland, Georgia, Macedonia, Lithuania.

FIFTH SEEDS - Armenia, Moldova, Albania, Faroe Islands, Azerbaijan, Liechtenstein, San

England probably won't complain if they end up in the same group as the Czechs or Turks, although heads may go down should the draw pair them with the likes of the Irish or even Romania who have developed the habit of shattering English confidence - defeat at the hands of the Eastern Europeans at Euro 2000 is still a bitter memory.

A desire to avoid France and Italy is understandable and they would probably pass on another meeting with Germany who are still smarting from that 5-1 World Cup loss in Munich last year.

Unless there is a dramatic shift in the European order of things, the French, already favourites to retain the World Cup this summer, will start their Euro 2004 campaign as favourites.

Ominously, French coach Roger Lemerre has no fears about his team's lofty aspirations.

"Since 1996, we have had a well anchored winning culture. For the moment the team plays its football without too much difficulty. It knows its strength."

At least, England can take heart from knowing they will avoid being in the same group as Scotland who have been seeded 20.

Keegan's England just edged past the Scots 2-1 in the Euro 2000 play-offs and the Auld Enemy will be buoyed by the arrival of Berti Vogts as new national coach.

"Berti Vogts is a world class coach, with an impressive track record of success in international football," said Scottish FA chief executive David Taylor.

Only the 10 group winners, along with hosts Portugal, are assured of a place in Euro 2004's endgame.

The runners-up will play-off with the five eventual winners making up the 16-team finals.

Jennifer-Martina showdown



AFP, Melbourne

Jennifer Capriati and Martina Hingis will replay their 2001 Australian Open final on Saturday and both have made it clear they badly want to win.

While Capriati has the psychological edge, having beaten Hingis here last year, the Swiss Miss will be determined to prove she can still mix it with the power hitters after a three year Grand Slam drought.

Both players were stretched in their semi-finals Thursday but came good, proving how much they want to taste a major success again.

Capriati, the defending champion and top seed, fought off dogged resistance from Belgian fourth seed Kim Clijsters to win 7-5, 3-6, 6-1 in one hour 37 minutes.

Hingis, seeded three, took three minutes less to shatter the title dreams of four-time champion Monica Seles 4-6, 6-1, 6-4.

"I know she wants it bad but I want it bad too and, you know, I've got nothing to lose," said Capriati.

The top seed rates her win here last year as so significant that she keeps a stuffed koala inside the front door of her Florida home so she is reminded of it every time she gets home.

She admitted to a wobble in the second set against Clijsters but is again training at the leash, ready to

renew battle with Hingis.

"I feel like I've proved myself pretty well just getting to the finals and I'm not going to stop there," she said.

"But all I can do is really just go for it and play my game. I think it will be a good match."

She said she was tired but would

refined her tactical acumen.

She put it to good use Thursday, sustaining a barrage of blows in the first set before working out what Seles was doing, reading the direction of her shots and grinding down the 28-year-old Yugoslav-born American.

Hingis said her come-from-behind victory was a big confidence booster going into the final.

"I think it was a very important match this one," she said. "Beating players like Monica, I mean Monica played very well beating Venus (in the quarter-finals) the other day. It's not everybody that gets to do that, and especially her, she has never beaten her in the past."

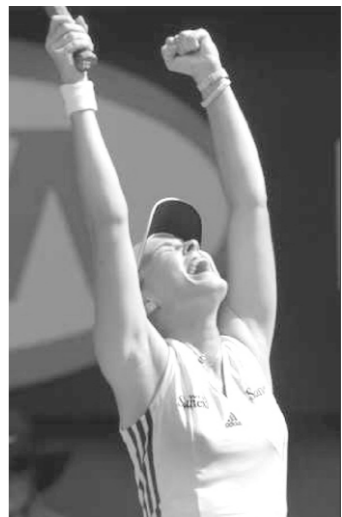
"So she is a very tough player and I'm happy to have beaten her" a different story.

"Last year here I was tired and Jennifer played well and I wasn't just there," she said, but added that she felt in much better shape now.

"It will be great to play her in the finals, and now it's the other way - she has to defend the title and I'm the rookie."

Seles, nearing the form that won her eight Grand Slams before being stabbed by a fan, put her loss down to too many unforced errors but gave credit to Hingis for putting the pressure on.

"She's playing well and I think she's going to get more and more confidence in each match and she's moving as well as she did, I think, before her surgery (for an ankle injury late last year)."



MARTINA HINGIS

be ship shape for Saturday.

"It was a tough match. We were doing a lot of running, a lot of hard hitting. The legs feel okay. It's expected to be a little bit sore after today but I have a day to recover."

Hingis used her best weapon to beat Seles -- her brain. Unable to physically compete with the brawn of Capriati and the tour's other musclemen, she instead has

Johansson thru'



AFP, Melbourne

Sweden's 16th seed Thomas Johansson fought back to beat Jiri Novak of the Czech Republic in five sets to reach the final of the Australian Open here Thursday night.

Johansson won 7-6 (7/5), 0-6, 4-6, 6-3, 6-4 in two hours 51 minutes

and will play either Russian ninth seed Marat Safin or German seventh seed Tommy Haas in Sunday's final.

He became the first Swedish player to reach a Grand Slam final since Magnus Norman was runner-up at the 2000 French Open, losing to Brazilian Gustavo Kuerten.

Should Johansson upset the odds on Sunday he will become the first Swedish player to win a Grand Slam title since Stefan Edberg defeated Pete Sampras at the 1992 US Open. The last Swede to play in an Australian Open final was Thomas Enqvist in 1999.

"If someone had told me before the tournament that I would be playing in the final I would tell them to go see a doctor," said 26-year-old Johansson. "I'm really surprised because of the way I was playing before the Open, I didn't expect much."

"But after the first two rounds I was feeling great on court and starting to play my best tennis."

Looking ahead to playing either Safin or Haas in the final, Johansson said: "I have played both of them. I played Haas last year and lost in three sets, and my record against Safin is won one lost two."

"They're both great players, they hit the ball hard, and are serving great. Whoever wins tomorrow will be the favourite on Sunday."

Johansson said he was very nervous before the semi-final but settled down when he won the

opening set tiebreaker without dropping service.

"I hadn't played in a Grand Slam semifinal before and I was very tight but I held serve through to the tiebreaker," said Johansson.

"I got too relaxed. I fell asleep. He played some great tennis in the second."

"I'm going to enjoy this victory and then prepare for Sunday's final."

"I am going to have a easy hit for an hour tomorrow, and maybe the

next day try to focus on the final."

The turning point for the Swede came when he broke with a couple of brilliant backhands in the fifth game of the fourth set, his first break of the match, and immediately the confidence began flowing.



THOMAS JOHANSSON

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

Crossword puzzle grid with clues: 1 'Pow!' from the will, 5 Favorite, 8 Recedes, 12 'Able was ...', 13 Actress, 14 Double agent, 15 Decorates fancily, 17 Very dry, 18 Jazz lover, 19 Pictures, 21 Boston airport, 24 Some-where out there, 25 Hertz rival, 26 Unkind remark, 30 'Little Women' woman, 31 Willy Loman's feld, 32 Kyoto, 33 Caused tingling, 35 Harvard rival, 36 Slender, 37 Faucet flow, 38 Drop, 41 Zero-star review, 42 From the top, 43 Summer chirpers, 44 Read bar codes, 49 A billion years, 50 One of HOMES, 51 Scenery chowers, 52 Actor Billy Williams, 53 Cardinal O'Connor's successor, 1 Humor, 2 The maiden, 3 Bush spokesmen, 4 Fleischer's Havens, 5 Olden days, 6 Ostrich's kin, 7 Symbolized, 8 Set of chews, 9 Wimbledon legend, 10 Sad, 11 Collections, 16 Mid-U.S. st., 20 Apple computers, 21 Genie's home, 22 Finished, 23 Caron role, 24 Composer Harold, 26 Equalized, 27 Gravy vessel, 28 Competent, 29 Layer, 31 Distort, 34 Circus workers, 35 Northern woman, once, 38 Sprite, 39 Bygone Peruvian, 40 Line of fashion, 41 Porcelain, 44 Cavalier essence, 45 Work unit, 46 Actress Carrere, 47 D.C. figure

Cryptogram puzzle: Q N K D C R S J P V S Q O Q O C O G P C H S N H G A Q O C H R I V J C F B C H Q A Q I O K D C K J S J - Q C J Q A C F B C N S C J H C - Yesterday's Cryptogram: BECAUSE HE HAS NO IRON LEFT TO WORK WITH, THE BLACKSMITH IS OUT OF HIS ELEMENT. Today's Cryptogram Clue: H equals C