

Edgy Eriksson

FROM PAGE 13 Eriksson underscored that restoring morale ahead of Friday's showdown with arch rivals Argentina will be a harder task than any tactical battle he might face against the Argentine national team.

"Raising the spirits of the players for the Argentina game is more important than whether we play 4-4-2 or 4-4-3," the England manager was quoted as saying in an interview with the Mirror.

"If you don't have the right mentality and go out thinking you are a loser, then you are going to lose. That is something that concerned me after the Sweden game and I told the players that. I must be positive too. If a manager goes around never smiling, almost crying, very tense and nervous, then that transmits negative energy to the players."

"If we doubt ourselves then we should go home at once. Argentina are a great team with fantastic players, but it's not impossible to beat them. They are not Supermen at all."

"These next few days before we play them are extremely important for us and no-one involved with England underestimates that fact. We can play better and we will do, I'm sure. If you think football is champagne and roses every day, then you should change your profession."

The England manager also hinted that he may choose to start skipper David Beckham, Nicky Butt and Kieron Dyer against Argentina, despite the fact all three are returning from injury and cannot be said to be fully fit.

Euro style

FROM PAGE 13 League winners Real Madrid. As Figó and Rui Costa are both around the 30-mark, along with Xavier and defender Fernando Couto - who were world youth champions in 1989 and 1991 - these finals are their last realistic chance to shine in the game's most prestigious tournament.

U.S. coach Bruce Arena also took heart from Senegal's shock win, and stressed that his side were determined to improve on their showing in the 1998 World Cup, where they lost all three qualifying games and had the worst record of the 32 teams.

Although outsiders, the U.S. side are no longer as tactically naive as they were in the early 1990s.

"It (France-Senegal) is not the first upset we will see. It demonstrates anyone can win, and we are not here to play three games and go home," said Arena.

"They (Portugal) are an outstanding team and have great attacking players, and it is going to be a very difficult game. We believe we will be prepared mentally and physically to win the game."

China cry

FROM PAGE 13 was hopeful Chinese fans would not misbehave, regardless of the result. "The Chinese people are very interested in this match because it's the first time China participates in the World Cup and they hope the Chinese team will do well. Of course I hope people will take any result and deal with it rationally," Liu said.

At Beijing University, where patriotism among the youth is strong, there was no sign of mourning as about 1,000 students quietly filed out of the main cafeteria after the game.

"It doesn't matter if they lose," said a student. "It's their first time in the World Cup."

China's sports authorities had said the Chinese team would be considered successful if they met any one of three goals - winning a match, drawing a match or scoring a goal.

That last modest objective was what many with realistic expectations were hoping for.

But after failing to score a single point in the game against Costa Rica, many fans believe it will be unlikely the team can score a goal against its next two opponents in the World Cup first rounds, Brazil and Turkey.

Army football

ISPR, Dhaka

Log Area clinched the Bangladesh Army Football Championship with a golden goal win over Savar Area in the final held at the Bogra Cantonment on Monday.

Sainik Mohammad Alamgir Hossain the all-important goal 14 minutes into the extra time.

What to watch ESPN World Cup Today Repeat at 9:00 am Sportscentre Hindi Sport News Live at 8:30 pm STAR Sports Harsha Online Cricket Talk Show Repeat at 10:30 am Trans World Sport Int'l Sports News Repeat at 11:30 am Sportsline Tonight Sport News Live at 10:30 pm World Cup Today Live at 11:00 pm

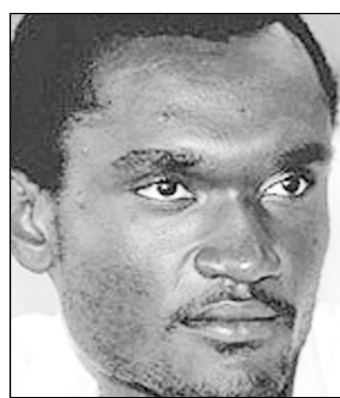
WI now against Kiwis

Cricket

AFP, Kingston

The West Indies will seek to continue their nascent cricketing recovery when they take on New Zealand in five one-day internationals and two Test matches, starting with a limited-overs game at Kingston's Sabina Park on Wednesday.

West Indies captain Carl Hooper, fresh from a gruelling, two-month home tour against India, showed faith in the squad that lost a five-match series of one dayers 2-1, but



CARL HOOPER

rapped his players for not showing enough application in the deciding match in Trinidad on Sunday.

West Indies won the five-match Test series 2-1. New Zealand have had a tortured build-up to their late-season Caribbean tour, which is expected to be affected by rain. International cricket is rarely played in June, when the rainy season has begun.

New Zealand's tour of Pakistan in May ended dramatically when a

bomb exploded outside their team hotel, but they had already suffered a heavy innings defeat in the first Test.

They landed in Jamaica in the middle of 11 days of heavy rain that prevented the team practising outdoors. The team first set foot outdoors on Sunday, when they trained at Sabina Park.

Pugnacious all-rounder Craig McMillan injured his ankle in training and missed Monday's warm-up match against a University of West Indies XI.

New Zealand batted first and were given a thorough examination



STEPHEN FLEMING

by the young generation of West Indies bowlers, several of whom will be playing for West Indies A in England this month.

However captain Stephen Fleming scored an elegant 64 and all-rounder Scott Styris made a bid for a place in Wednesday's side with an unbeaten 63 as New Zealand notched up 254 all out in 50 overs.

In reply, New Zealand pace bowler Shane Bond got his first serious run-out since he broke down

with an injured foot at the end of the tour to Australia six months ago, when he took on and mastered the best Australian batsmen.

Bond bowled eight overs, taking one for 27, while spinner Daniel Vettori took three for 24 as the University team collapsed to 155 all out.

Bond and New Zealand's other bowlers will have to face a West Indies batting line-up that has a new-found backbone in the middle-order.

Although batting legend Brian Lara struggled for form against India, Shivnarine Chanderpaul and skipper Hooper stepped successfully into the breach.

Hooper and Chanderpaul featured in a 296-run partnership in the first Test in Guyana, with the captain scoring an impressive 233. They set an example to youngsters like Ramnaresh Sarwan and Wavell Hinds, who also made valuable scores.

The West Indies also returned to using a four-pronged seam attack. Although it lacked the hostility of former generations of bowlers, Merv Dillon and Cameron Cuffy proved themselves more than worthy of their international place.

TEAMS

WEST INDIES (from): Carl Hooper (captain), Gareth Brees, Shivnarine Chanderpaul, Pedro Collins, Corey Collymore, Cameron Cuffy, Merv Dillon, Chris Gayle, Ryan Hinds, Wavell Hinds, Ridley Jacobs, Brian Lara, Ramnaresh Sarwan.

NEW ZEALAND (from): Stephen Fleming (captain), Nathan Astle, Shane Bond, Ian Butler, Chris Harris, Matthew Hart, Paul Hitchcock, Matt Horne, Craig McMillan, Chris Nevin, Jacob Oram, Scott Styris, Daniel Tuffy, Daniel Vettori, Lou Vincent.

Akram aims at a fitting bye

Cricket

AFP/REUTERS, Karachi

Famed Pakistani pacer Wasim Akram packed his bags for Australia on Tuesday hoping for a memorable last trip down under with the national team.

"Australia is a great place to tour and a great team to play against and I hope that I leave my last impression in an indelible manner," Akram told AFP.

A 13-man Pakistan squad would set off for Australia late Tuesday for a three-match limited-over series starting next week.

The 36-year-old Akram, with a record 456 wickets in limited-overs matches and 414 in Tests, last month announced he would hang up his pads after next year's World Cup in South Africa.

"I have some fantastic memories of playing in Australia and top of them all is Pakistan's win in the 1992 World Cup," he said.

"It would be a totally different tour for me because nowadays I enjoy (playing) more than usual and strive to do my best for the team in a relaxed, pressureless manner."

Akram took 18 wickets to help Pakistan win their only World Cup 10 years ago.

"It (Australia) is the place where the most competitive cricket is played and people love and appreciate every good performance," said Akram, who led Pakistan to their only tri-series win down under in

1996-97. Akram also said Pakistan had every chance of beating the fancied Australians.

"We are a good side and have every chance to beat Australia because they now have a relatively less experienced middle-order batting in the absence of the Waugh brothers."

Australia sacked Steve Waugh from their one-day squad for the recent tour of South Africa, where they took the Test series 2-1 and the



WASIM AKRAM

seven-match one-day series 5-1. Akram said he was glad the Waugh brothers would not be playing Pakistan.

"The Waugh brothers were among the top players of the world so it's a relief that they are not there to bother you," he said.

Akram said the result of the series -- two indoor matches and one outdoor game on June 12, 15

and 19 -- would depend on how the teams perform under pressure.

"The result of this series would depend on how a team handles the pressure and it would decide the fate of the series because the two best teams in the world are competing."

He agreed that the series was a good work-out for both teams ahead of the World Cup.

"This series would give a chance to both the teams to assess each other's strength before the World Cup and a win for any team would do a world of good for the major event."

Akram led Pakistan during losing Test series in Australia in 1995-96 and 1999-2000 but said the results did not paint a clear picture of the encounters.

"Pakistan has played well in Australia but it's the mental toughness of the Australians that carried the day for them in the end," he said.

However, the Pakistanis will have to do without the services of Misbahul Haq as the middle-order batsman has been forced to withdraw after contracting hepatitis.

"Misbah has been ruled out of the tour on medical grounds as he has got hepatitis," Pakistan Cricket Board spokesman Khalid Butt told Reuters.

Chief selector Wasim Bari said the decision not to call up a replacement had been taken after proper consultation and it was felt that all-rounder Shoaib Malik could fill the gap as he has been batting well recently.

FRENCH FRIES

Tennis

AFP, Paris

French Open diary for Tuesday June 4:

Roger Lemerre's men could take some lessons from France's tennis stars as Les Bleus take on Uruguay in their crunch World Cup tie on Thursday. During the annual soccer tournament on Monday night, a team of French tennis players trounced the Rest of the World 6-4 in the Parc des Princes. The French line-up included former France international striker Jean-Pierre Papin who was backed up by Davis Cup captain Guy Forget and Arnaud Clement. The Rest of the World included John McEnroe, Emilio Sanchez, Andres Gomez and Marcelo Filippini.

BERNADETTE LOOK-A-LIKE

Security guards at Roland Garros were given a scare at the weekend when a look-a-like of Bernadette Chirac, wife of French president Jacques, managed to make her way to the presidential tribune at the French Open. She arrived escorted by motorcyclists and bodyguards but was stopped by security personnel as she settled into her seat overlooking centre court. The prank was later found to have been organized by a French television station.

NOT A DADDY'S GIRL ANYMORE

Damir Dokic, the leader of the pack when it comes to tennis dads from hell, is a noteworthy absentee from daughter Jelena's side at Roland Garros this year. The 19-year-old

Yugoslavian number seven seed is here with her mother Liliana while dad, the scourge of tournament organisers everywhere, is at home.

"My mum has been travelling with me for the last year. We have moved back to Yugoslavia now and my father is doing other things. He has a lot of work to do."

Dokic takes on top seed and defending champion Jennifer

Caprati of the United States for a place in the semi-finals here on Tuesday.

WHEELCHAIR TENNIS

Anyone can play tennis and just to prove it the Commission of Handicapped Tennis and Sliding organised a demonstration between two of France's wheelchair champions and two roller bladers.



PHOTO: AFP

Russian Marat Safin is exultant after beating France's Arnaud Di Pasquale on Monday.

Green Delta hockey Mariner derail Railway

SPORTS REPORTER

Mariner Young's Club registered their eleventh win in the Green Delta Premier Hockey League with a 2-0 win over Dhaka Railway in one of the two return leg matches at the Maulana Bhasani Stadium yesterday.

Pakistani recruit Yasin Bhatti gave Mariner a lead converting a penalty stroke in the 24th minute while Razzak sealed the Railwaymen's fate through a short corner in the 44th minute.

With yesterday's win, Mariner raised their tally to 34 points from 13 matches. On the other hand, Railway remained fourth from the bottom on 11 points.

In the day's other match, Bangladesh Sporting Club escaped from the relegation zone with a surprising 3-0 win over front runners Usha Kira Chakra.

The winners led the first half 1-0. Junaid converted two penalty strokes in the 26th and 64th minute while Ashish added the other in the 62nd minute.

With that win, Bangladesh Sporting Club moved into fifth spot having raised their tally to 16 points from 14 matches. Usha, however, remained fourth with 28 points.

Baby ban furore

AFP, Tokyo

Japanese World Cup organisers were under attack Tuesday for refusing to allow couples with babies into stadiums unless they had tickets for their offspring.

Under the headline "Conspicuous empty seats, but ..." the Mainichi Shimbun said more than 20 families had been denied entry as of Monday as they did not have tickets for the babies they brought with them.

"Can't they be flexible?" the newspaper quoted Maki Yoshizawa, 31, as saying outside the Niigata stadium after she gave up hope of watching the Croatia-Mexico match Monday as she did not have a ticket for her 18-month old baby.

Her 33-year-old husband, Akira, called her on a mobile from inside the stadium to say there were many empty seats, fuelling her anger, the Mainichi said.

But the Japan Organising Committee for the World Cup (JAWOC) stood firm, saying anybody, including infants who do not have to pay transport fares, needed a ticket to get into a game.

"Regardless of age, you need to have a ticket," JAWOC spokesman Iwami Fukuda said, arguing it was FIFA policy for the World Cup and the rule was not going to change.

Beleaguered ref retaliates

AFP, Seoul

The first South Korean to referee a World Cup match was forced onto the defensive Tuesday after sending off two Turkish players and missing a blatant act of the kind of cheating FIFA has said it aims to stop.

Kim Young-Joo was the target of a barrage of criticism after failing to spot Brazilian star Rivaldo feigning injury at the end of the Group C game which Brazil won 2-1 after Kim awarded a penalty that also proved controversial.

"I did my best to perform my duty fairly and impartially," Kim told the Yonhap national news agency after Turkey's coach Senol Gunes said "there was a tremendous injustice in this result."

In the last minutes of Monday's game, Rivaldo writhed on the ground clutching his face after a ball kicked at him by Turkey's Hakan Unsal hit him only on the leg and arm.

Japan's joy

FROM PAGE 13 though not his politics.

Many fans, though, could not disguise their disappointment at the draw or irritation at some of the referee's calls, which were greeted with booing by usually polite Japanese fans.

"The game was incredibly exciting, it was great and now we can have confidence over the next two matches," said Takamichi Miyamoto, a microchip salesman who watched with friends at a downtown Tokyo Chinese restaurant.

"But I wasn't convinced by some of the refs' calls," he added. "Not just the last goal, but two other times when (striker Atsushi) Yanagisawa was fouled."

Teacher Nakagawa in Sapporo, who holds a referee's licence, shared the doubts. "I am a bit unhappy. There were moments when his decisions were hard to understand," he said.

Still, many were encouraged enough to hope the team could win at least one match and even survive the group. No World Cup host have ever failed to reach the second round. Russia and Tunisia make up group H.

"We'll beat Russia, we'll beat Russia," chanted youths as they poured into the streets from the sports bars and cafes where they



Rescue workers lift the body of Hansie Cronje on to an ambulance at a hospital in George on Sunday. The autopsy of the former South Africa captain was done at this hospital.

Cronje funeral live

Cricket

REUTERS, Johannesburg

The funeral of controversial former South African cricket captain Hansie Cronje will be broadcast live on Wednesday from his hometown of Bloemfontein amid confusion over who will be welcome.

In a radio interview with the South African Broadcasting Corporation on Tuesday, Cronje's father Ernie confirmed that the family had sent two letters to the executive of the United Cricket Board (UCB) of South Africa, the first saying their presence would not be welcome, the second that anyone could attend.

He said: "The UCB executive had recently said that it did not associate with Hansie Cronje... In the light of that, and also in the light of statements that were made now after his death, we said that it's better that UCB executive are not welcome to attend the funeral."

However he added that after the family had consulted Cronje's widow Bertha she said her late husband would have wanted anyone to attend.

Cronje, 32, died on Saturday in a cargo plane that slammed into a mountain in the Western Cape province.

The devout Christian, stunned the cricket world two years ago when admitting he had accepted

around 130,000 dollars from bookmakers to influence the course of matches. He was subsequently banned for life by the UCB.

The satellite SuperSport TV channel will broadcast the funeral live. The service will take place at his old school, Grey College.

Bronwyn Wilkinson, a spokes-

woman for the UCB, said that several UCB members planned to attend but she could not say if anyone from the executive would be there.

She added that several players from the national team would pay their respects to their former captain at the service.

Current team captain Shaun Pollock, playing for English county side Warwickshire, told Reuters he would fly out of Britain on Tuesday night to be at the funeral. "I'll be there," he said by telephone.

Former UCB head and current executive director of the 2003 Cricket World Cup, Dr Ali Bacher, also said he would attend.

"I have spoken to the family and I will be at the funeral," he told Reuters.

The elder Cronje also questioned why the family was suddenly getting support from previously hostile quarters.

"For two years and two months we didn't have the support of the people. Why now?" he asked.

Cronje's reputation has been posthumously rehabilitated in the local press, most of which vilified him at the height of the match-fixing scandal.

A bad French day

Tennis

AFP, Paris

Former champion Andre Agassi mounted a thrilling fightback to set up a quarterfinal showdown with Spaniard Juan Carlos Ferrero in the French Open here on Monday, as Russian second seed Marat Safin booked his spot against France's Sebastian Grosjean.

It was not a good day for French wildcards as 32-year-old Agassi came from two sets and a service break down to beat Paul-Henri Mathieu, ranked at 103 in the world, 4-6, 3-6, 6-3, 6-3, 6-3 in 3hr 2min.

Former US Open champion Safin then came on court to send the 175th-ranked Arnaud Di Pasquale home 3-6, 6-4, 6-3, 6-2 in 2hr 36min serving for the match with an ace.

Both Mathieu and Di Pasquale had been bidding to follow in the footsteps of Henri Leconte, the last French wildcard to advance beyond the round of 16.

Agassi, chasing his eighth Grand Slam crown, now faces Ferrero, the 11th seed, who saw off the challenge of Argentina's Gaston Gaudio, seeded 31.

Ferrero admitted that his dream of playing against Agassi in the quarterfinals drove him through his marathon fourth round tie against Argentine Gaston Gaudio.

The man nicknamed 'Mosquito'

for his speed and small physique achieved on the Suzanne Lenglen Court what he has failed to do in other Grand Slam tournaments - winning two five-setters.

After his lengthy second round tie against Frenchman Nicolas Pietrangeli, it was uncertain whether the 22-year-old Spaniard, who had suffered an ankle injury in training, would come through the 3hr 50min tie against his gritty Argentine opponent.

But Ferrero came away 6-7, 6-1, 6-7, 6-2, 6-4 winner in 3hr 15min and must get past Agassi to reach his third consecutive semi-finals here, after having lost in the final eight for the past two years to eventual champion Gustavo Kuerten.

Agassi's comeback echoed his fightback in 1999 when he recovered from two sets down in the final to beat Andrei Medvedev and become only the fifth man in history to win all four Grand Slam titles.

But he had to dig deep - in the final set, he had been 1-3, 30-40 down before he recovered to march into his eighth quarterfinal here.

Mathieu had raced into a two sets lead after just 67 minutes to leave Agassi shell-shocked as he was driven scampering all over the Philippe Chatrier Court.

Rain had started to fall just as Agassi served to save the second set and distracted by people in the crowd putting up umbrellas, he served a double fault to hand the set

to his opponent, 12 years his junior. After a brief rain delay, the Las Vegas's fortunes continued to plummet as he again dropped serve to fall 0-2 down in the third set.

But then the match turned in the fourth game of the third set when Agassi achieved his first break of the match on his fifth break point and Mathieu's game began to fall apart.

Safin, 22, struggled in the first set but found his feet on the red clay against Di Pasquale who was making his comeback from knee surgery.

"I was a little scared at the beginning," said Safin, who admitted to feeling nervous.

"He started to play very well, to push forward and play very fast, so I lost my concentration. I was a little nervous, but I think my served saved my game today."

This year, Safin has reached the top of the Champions Race courtesy of his runner-up spots at the Australian Open and the Hamburg Masters as well as a quarter-final place on the clay at Monte Carlo.

He has also been working with 1992 Olympic champion Marc Rosset to try and improve his clay court performance.

Safin next meets Grosjean, the 10th seed, who eased past Belgian Xavier Malisse 6-2, 7-5, 6-3 and is bidding to reach the semi-finals for the second straight year.

Agassi is now serious

Tennis

AFP, Paris

Andre Agassi has dismissed the early rounds of the French Open as a phoney war and said that his last eight showdown against Spain's Juan Carlos Ferrero represents the start of the real Grand Slam battle.

The 32-year-old Agassi, revelling in the spotlight of being the oldest man left in the tournament and already having seen off the challenges of young pretenders Tommy Robredo and Paul-Henri Mathieu, now has to get past the 22-year-old Ferrero if he is to reach his sixth semi-final at Roland Garros.

"It's time to play big time tennis now - there's no way to get around that at this stage," said Agassi.

"I have never played Ferrero but he has made a statement here in the last two years by reaching the semi-finals. I've got a lot of respect for the power of his game on this surface."

Agassi needed five sets to get past Mathieu on Monday in their Centre Court fourth round clash, with the greater experience of the

American eventually telling in a 4-6, 3-6, 6-3, 6-3, 6-3 win.

However, Agassi revealed that when he was the same age as 20-year-old Mathieu, planning seriously for events, even Grand Slams, was never high on his list of priorities.

In 1990, when he reached his first of three finals here, he arrived for his first round match the day before his date on court, not concerning himself with such matters like practice.

He recalled that campaign because of the similarities with the dilemma in which he found himself against Mathieu - two sets and a service break down before he turned the whole thing around.

"I remember it well. I played Martin Wostenholme of Canada and he was up a set and a break and I broke three racquets!"

Agassi won in four that day, and went all the way to the final where he ran out of steam against Ecuador's Andres Gomez.

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