

Army boxing

UNB, Dhaka
The annual boxing championship of Bangladesh Army began at Ghatail Cantonment yesterday. More than 100 boxers drawn from different formations of the Bangladesh Army are taking part in the seven-day meet in 14 weight categories. Twenty-five qualifying bouts were held on the opening day.

Sanath

FROM PAGE 13
This was Bangladesh's 12th defeat in 13 matches since they gained Test status two years ago. And it was the 11th consecutive innings in which they failed to pass the 200 mark, despite a batting 75 from teenager Mohammad Ashraful. The two sides now play three one-day internationals on August 4, 5 and 7. Bangladesh skipper Khaled Mashud bemoaned yet another batting collapse. "Our middle-order didn't contribute enough runs," he said. "But we've some promising youngsters in the side and hope to do well in the one-day series, even though we know Sri Lanka is a top side in the shorter version of the game." Several of Sri Lanka's nine first-choice players rested for this match, including spinner Muttiah Muralitharan, return for the one-day series. Left-arm seamer Chaminda Vaas was recalled after being rested for both Tests, following a poor tour of England but there was no spot for strike partners Nuwan Zoysa or Dilhara Fernando. And pace bowler Chamila Gamage, who took a wicket with his first ball in Test cricket, was rewarded with a limited-overs spot. Coach Mohsin Kamal agreed that the limited-overs game, favoured in Bangladesh's domestic cricket, is completely different from the five-day game. "They need more time to play Test cricket, more time to minimise their mistakes," the former Pakistan Test bowler said. "They need to be more patient. Test cricket is about how much time you're willing to spend at the crease." The International Cricket Council (ICC) confirmed after the match that Bangladesh's Test status was not in danger. "It's simply not on the agenda. It's not something that's being brought up at the moment," ICC spokesman Brendan McClements said. "We take note of their performances, of course, but that in no way suggests there's going to be any question of losing a Test-playing nation."

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Hunt for missing

FROM PAGE 13
Busan, South Korea. "It's not fair the government puts in the money and the athletes disappear," Salam said. The news of the disappearance came a day after Bangladesh celebrated its first-ever gold medal of these Games through shooter Asif Hussain.

Bangladeshi journalist Masud Alam said it had become a "trend" for sportsmen to vanish from sporting events.

"It's not the first time our athletes have gone missing," he said. "Nearly 14 sportsmen, and some journalists too, did not return home after the Asian Games in Hiroshima in 1994."

"It is very embarrassing for the country. One guy wins a gold medal and a few others just vanish."

Pak series

FROM PAGE 13
The couple have been engaged for six years although Porter does not share Waugh's love of gambling on race horses.

Porter insists on one gambling-free day a week when they are at home together.

England's hectic winter



AFP, London

England's leading cricketers are set to face seven months of non-stop international cricket after the schedule for this winter's tour of Australia was confirmed Wednesday.

As well as the traditional five Tests against Australia from November to January, England will be involved in a triangular one-day series also featuring Sri Lanka.

Should they play in the third one-day final at Adelaide, on January 27, England will have barely a fortnight before their opening World Cup match against Zimbabwe in Harare on February 13.

Meanwhile, England face their latest-ever finish to a home international season.

The fourth and final Test of the current series against India is due

Three out

FROM PAGE 13

"I'm really happy with that performance. Commonwealth gold and a personal best at the same time, it's not bad work," said Thomas, who promptly turned around and swam the 100m freestyle semi-finals.

She finished fourth in her semi, but managed to grab the eighth and last berth in the final.

England's Zoe Baker won the women's 50m breaststroke, although she couldn't quite match the world record she set in the semi-finals on Tuesday.

to start at The Oval on September 5.

And if that match goes the distance it will leave England with just nine days before their first match of the International Cricket Council (ICC) Trophy one-day

tournament in Colombo, Sri Lanka, also against Zimbabwe.

The itinerary for the England and Sri Lankan cricket tours to Australia in 2002-03 released on Thursday:

ENGLAND TOUR

- Oct 22: ACB Chairman's XI v England, Lilac Hill, Perth
- Oct 24-25: Western Australia v England, WACA Ground, Perth
- Oct 28-30: Western Australia v England, WACA Ground, Perth
- Nov 2-4: Queensland v England, Gabba ground, Brisbane
- Nov 7-11: First Test Australia v England, Gabba
- Nov 15-17: Australia v England, Hobart
- Nov 21-25: Second Test Australia v England, Adelaide
- Nov 29-Dec 3: Third Test Australia v England WACA Ground, Perth
- Dec 6: (D/N) NSW v England, Sydney Cricket Ground
- Dec 8: (D/N) Australia 'A' v England, Sydney Cricket Ground
- Dec 10: Prime Minister's XI v England, Manuka Oval, Canberra
- Dec 26-30: Fourth Test Australia v England, Melbourne
- Jan 2-6: Fifth Test Australia v England, Sydney Cricket Ground
- Jan 8: Sir Donald Bradman XI v England, Bowral, NSW

SRI LANKA TOUR

- Dec 14: (D/N) Australia v Sri Lanka, Brisbane
- Dec 29: Victoria Country v Sri Lanka, Hastings, Victoria
- Jan 1: (D/N) Australia v Sri Lanka, Melbourne
- Jan 7: (D/N) Australia v Sri Lanka, Adelaide
- TRIANGULAR SERIES
- Dec 13: (D/N) Australia v England, Sydney
- Dec 15: (D/N) Australia v England, Melbourne
- Dec 17: (D/N) England v Sri Lanka, Brisbane
- Dec 20: (D/N) England v Sri Lanka, Perth
- Dec 22: (D/N) Australia v Sri Lanka, Perth
- Jan 9: (D/N) Australia v Sri Lanka, Sydney
- Jan 11: Australia v England, Hobart
- Jan 13: (D/N) England v Sri Lanka, Sydney
- Jan 15: (D/N) Australia v Sri Lanka, Brisbane
- Jan 17: (D/N) England v Sri Lanka, Adelaide
- Jan 19: (D/N) Australia v England, Adelaide
- Jan 21: (D/N) Australia v Sri Lanka, Melbourne
- Jan 23: First Final (D/N) Sydney
- Jan 25: Second Final (D/N) Melbourne
- Jan 27: Third Final (D/N, if required) Adelaide

Tudor hopes to return



AFP, London

Fast bowler Alex Tudor is optimistic that he will be able to prove his fitness to the England selectors ahead of next week's second Test against India.

However England captain Nasser Hussain has laid down stringent guidelines concerning bowlers returning from injury which Tudor may not be able to meet.

Hussain, who was also without Tudor's fellow quicks Darren Gough (knee) and Andrew Caddick (side) during the first Test, was adamant that before earning a recall, bowlers must first prove their fitness in a first-class fixture.

And because Surrey's next championship match starts at Hove on August 8 -- the same day England begin the second Test against India at Trent Bridge -- Tudor appears to be out of contention.

Surrey quick Tudor, 24, missed England's 170-run win concluded Monday in the series opener at Lord's with shin splints -- an injury

sustained during India's one-day triangular series final victory two weeks earlier.

He returned to county action on Sunday with seven overs against Essex in a One-day League match and expects to be in the side for the Trophy semi-final against Yorkshire

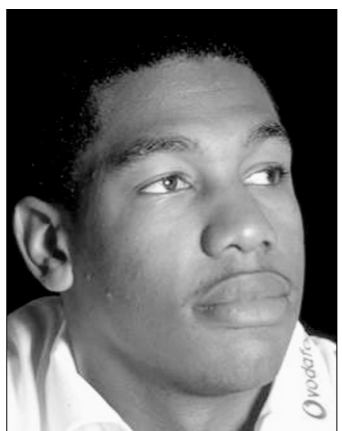
However, his cause could be helped if the 'slight' injuries sustained by pace bowlers Simon Jones (side strain) and Andrew Flintoff (groin) at Lord's worsen and England are left short of alternatives.

Tudor's latest injury problem was particularly ill-timed because he won the man-of-the-match during England's previous Test, a 10-wicket victory over Sri Lanka at Old Trafford in June -- a performance that many thought had cemented his international place.

"I was very frustrated to miss out on the Test match," said Tudor. "I wanted to use this Test towards establishing myself in the England team."

"I was lucky enough to get the man-of-the-match award in the previous Test at Old Trafford and got drafted into the one-day squad and I wanted to be part of the first Test against India at Lord's."

"It was disappointing I wasn't able to do that, but hopefully the injury has cleared up now and if things go well maybe I'll get in for the next Test."



ALEX TUDOR
at Headingley -- a match delayed 24 hours until Thursday because of a complete washout.

Success left, right & centre



REUTERS, London

Selectors have always been clowns and always will be. The average sports fan, armed with a pint of beer, a loud voice and blessed hindsight, knows more than the lot of them put together.

Occasionally, though, there are moments of respite. Right now, England's cricket selectors are enjoying one of those rare moments.

They recall a grizzled 39-year-old and the blossoms. They gamble on a raw 24-year-old pace bowler and he dazzles.

Another pace bowler whose mental approach has been publicly called into question by his own captain returns to rave reviews

while a balding batsman emerges from three years in the wilderness and people wonder why he was ever dropped.

Everything David Graveney, chairman of selectors of the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB), and his panel have tried this English summer, much of it forced on them by a long injury list, has turned to gold.

Alec Stewart's success -- courtesy of James Foster, 17 years his junior, breaking his arm -- was perhaps the most predictable, since he has been burning with indignation ever since he was dropped.

He made his point with a century in the 2-0 Test series win against the Sri Lankans, before averaging over 52 in a one-day triangular event. His form behind the stumps was also nothing short of spectacular.

Alex Tudor -- who Nasser

Hussain suggested needed the help of "mind people" last year after succumbing yet again to injury -- took nine wickets at 17.66 runs apiece against the Sri Lankans while John Crawley, who had last played against Australia in 1999, scored 72 runs for one dismissal against Sanath Jayasuriya's side before scoring 64 and 100 not out against India at Lord's.

And what about all-rounder Craig White, not offered an England contract at the start of the season, floundering at Yorkshire yet taking full advantage of a shock Lord's recall with a half-century and four wickets?

Perhaps the most exciting selection, though, has been that of Simon Jones.

There may be a kink in his technique, his body sliding alarmingly away as he delivers the ball, but he is already fast and potentially very, very fast.

Yet to win his county cap with Glamorgan, he was called up for the first Test against the Indians and, despite predictions that he would be slaughtered by arguably the best batting side in the world, he took four wickets in the game. It would have been five if Sachin Tendulkar had not been dropped off a sitter.

To ice his cake, Jones then hammered 44 off 43 balls in his one visit to the crease.

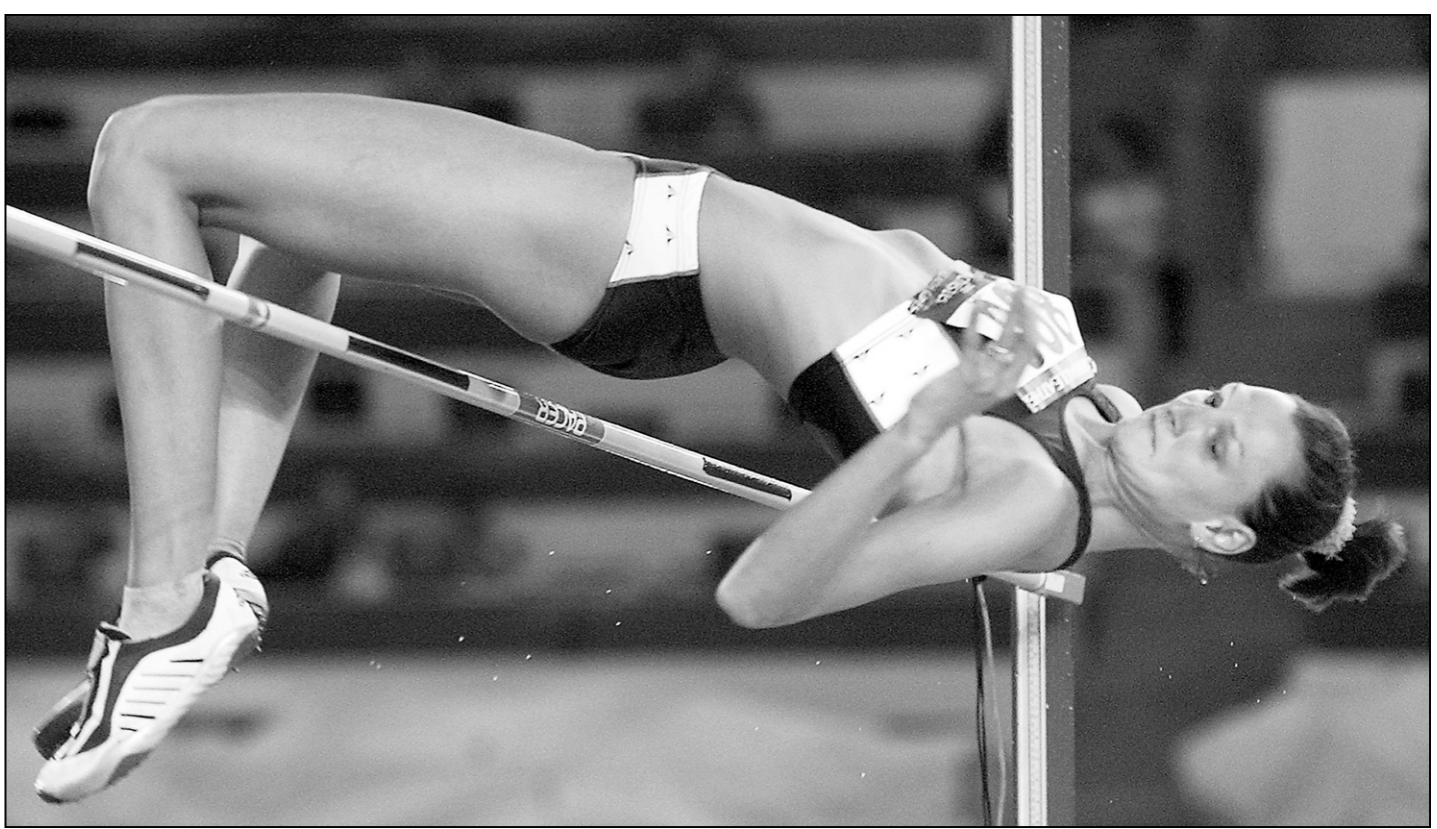
Two words of warning to the selectors, however, before they start relaxing in the warm comfort of their current success.

Chris Schofield. Like Jones, Schofield was fast-tracked into the England side in an attempt to give the team that extra dimension.

While Jones offers pace, Schofield was another English rarity in purveying wrist spin. He was awarded a central contract in 2000 and selected for his first cap, aged 21.

Since when he has disappeared without trace.

Simply too wayward, he played two Tests, not bowling in the first against Zimbabwe and taking no wicket for 73 in the second. He duly lost his England contract the following year as the selectors backtracked as fast as they could.



South Africa's Hestrie Cloete clears the bar on her way to winning the high jump gold at the Commonwealth Games on July 31.

PHOTO: AFP

India upset by rain

INTERNET, Worcestershire

After a heavy defeat to England in last week's first Test, India's frustration grew when the first day of their tour match against Worcestershire on Thursday was ruined by rain.

The tourists had been looking to use the four-day fixture to play their batsmen back into form after the 170-run defeat at Lord's.

The top five in the batting order for that game, including Sachin Tendulkar, Rahul Dravid and skipper Sourav Ganguly, have all been included in the line-up.

But torrential overnight rain never relented and left umpires George Sharp and Richard Kettleborough with no option but to call off the opening day's play at 1245 British Standard Time.

The weather forecast is also unsettled for the remainder of the week in what is the only game that the Indians have before the second Test begins at Trent Bridge on August 8.

To make matters worse, Worcestershire have no indoor practice facilities and the tourists had to be content with a fitness session in a city centre gymnasium.

India team manager Ranga Reddy singled the poor condition of Hampshire's pitch prior to the first Test as a major factor in that loss, and said things were currently no better.

Shining India

AFP, Biscay

India's Anjali Bhagwat won her third gold of the Commonwealth Games here on Thursday when she clinched victory in the women's 10m Air Rifle final.

She scored 550.8 points to beat countrywoman Suma Shirur, who had 500 points, into the silver medal position with England's Louise Minnett winning bronze with 494.8 points.

The win gave India its ninth gold in the shooting competition and the country's 15th gold overall in the Games.

Shirur, with whom Bhagwat had clinched the gold in the pairs event earlier in the competition, said she was overjoyed with her medal haul and was looking forward to showing them off to her family when she gets home.

Bhagwat also won a gold with Raj Kumari in the 50m Rifle Three Positions Pairs event.

Charlotte Kerwood of England won the women's double trap shooting gold at the Commonwealth Games here on Thursday with a score of 141 points.

Nadine Stanton of New Zealand won the silver with 134 points while Cynthia Meyer of Canada taking bronze with 132.

Pat becomes a father

AFP, Sydney

Australian tennis star Pat Rafter became a proud father Thursday with the birth of his first son.

"We are ecstatic to have our little man with us," said Rafter after his partner, Lara Feltham, gave birth Thursday morning to the three kilogram (six pound, 11 ounce) boy at a private hospital on Australia's eastern coast.

"Everything went well with the delivery and we are extremely thankful for the care and professionalism from the hospital and its staff," Rafter said in a statement released through the ATP, the professional tennis body.

Rafter did not reveal the name of his son, the couple's first child, saying only: "As you can understand, this is an intimate time in our lives and we would appreciate your respect for our privacy."

Super six for England



AFP, Manchester

Host nation England brought the curtain down on the Commonwealth Games athletics in style here Wednesday winning six of the 11 titles on offer to give a Royal Command performance in front of Prince Edward.

Standout performances by two of England's ageing injury-prone all-stars Kelly Holmes (1500m) and Steve Backley (javelin) for their second and third titles respectively led the way while Ashia Hansen retained her title in true champion fashion by winning on the last jump.

Both the men's 4x400 and 4x100 relay teams won, though by the narrowest of margins with the Jamaicans crying foul in the latter relay at a home town decision with both of them given the same time.

England could also have finally unearthed the middle distance

mates including the outstanding 400m hurdle champion Jana Pittman helped her hugely to win the 4x400m relay inflicting a rare defeat on the hosts.

It was all downhill for Jamaica after getting off to a golden start with a 1-2 in the women's 100m hurdles through university room-mates Lacena Golding-Clark and Vonette Dixon.

Their men were edged out in the 4x100m relay provoking boos from their watching supporters and ended in farce as 400m individual champion Mark Blackwood dropped the baton with at least a silver beckoning in the 4x400m relay.

There was joy too for the Bahamas Debbie Ferguson as she won her third title of the championships in the 4x100m relay to emulate Australia's Raelene Boyle, who did it twice in 1970 and 1974.

Nigeria may have come away from the able-bodied sprints with no titles but Adekunle Adesoji had no equals in the disabled men's 100m

year-old Backley set the example to the rest of the team with Holmes romping away from the field to add to her title from 1994 and leaving the woman who defeated her in 1998 Jackline Maranga of Kenya in fourth.

"This is the icing on the cake after the ups and downs of the last few years," said the 2000 Olympic bronze medalist.

"I was so petrified of getting injured I nearly didn't bother going out to practice last week," she added.

Backley, who won in 1990 and 1994 and got silver in 1998, said he was delighted to have got his third title.

"I don't know what it is about the Commonwealths - well I do actually as fortunately the Czech Republic's Jan Zeleny is noot here! - and I also usually throw better at the Olympics but Jan always throws that much better," said Backley.

Hansen like male team-mate Jonathan Edwards pulled one great hop skip and a jump out of the bag to deny Cameroon's Françoise Mbongo the title just as she did in 1998.

"I saw her celebrating and decided right give it your all girl it ain't over till it's over and I produced it when I needed to," said the American-born world indoor record-holder.

The roof if there had been one would have come off when Manchester-born 200m bronze medalist Darren Campbell anchored the English team to the 4x100m hairline decision over Jamaica.

"There is no doubt in my mind that it was a hometown decision," stormed the man who ended abreast of Campbell, Assefa Powell.

It was the second time that 28-year-old Campbell had benefitted from a photo finish going his way but given that his injury blight over the past year had nearly driven him to suicide no-one could begrudge him his moment of glory.

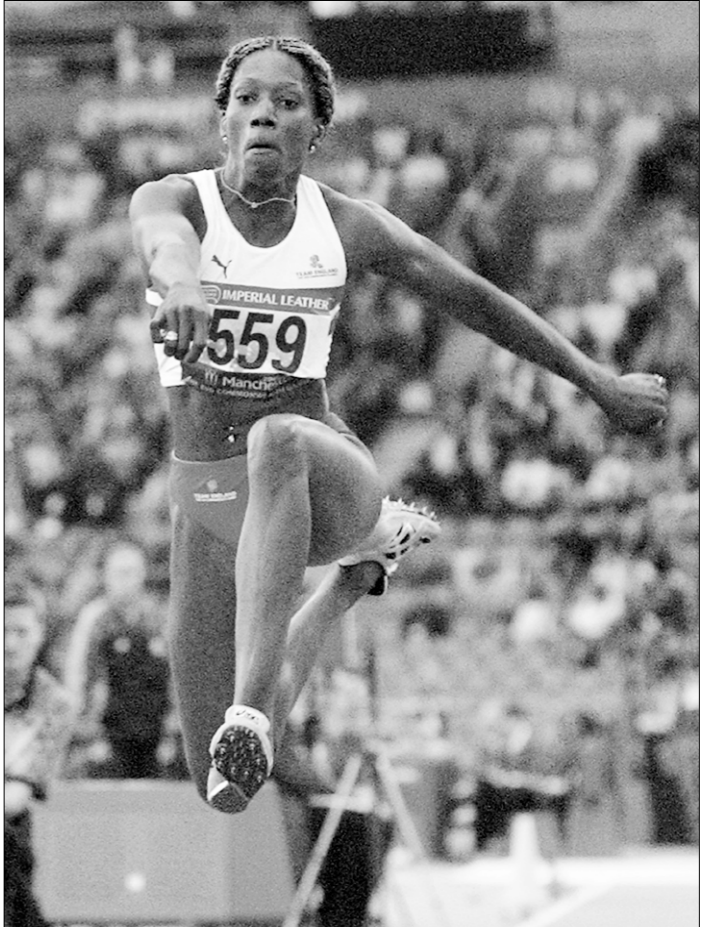
Freeman by her own admission was not race fit, having taken time out to care for her husband Sandy Bodecker after he was diagnosed with throat cancer earlier this year.

But it only left her more determined to return and dominate the event as she did up to the moment she won in Sydney.

"I'm only human but I've shown my face back on the international stage."

"Now I'm going to go back home and think about a third world title," she said.

How many of England's winners here Wednesday will win even one of those next year in Paris is questionable but for one heady night they were tops.



England's Ashia Hansen leaps for her triple jump gold at the Commonwealth Games on July 31.

PHOTO: AFP

successor to the two Steves, Cram and Ovet, and Sebastian Coe in 1500m winner Michael East.

All the pomp and circumstance overshadowed a triumphant return to championship running of Australia's 2000 Olympic heroine Cathy Freeman, whose team-

breaking the world record for the second time in two days as he won the title in 10.76secs which would have been good enough for the quarter-finals of the non-handicapped event.

However it was England's night as 32-year-old Holmes and 33-

NZ, SA enter semis



AFP, Manchester

New Zealand and South Africa joined Australia and Pakistan in the men's hockey semi-finals of the Commonwealth Games on Wednesday, leaving hosts England out in the cold.

The South Africans ended England's gold medal dream on home turf with a 1-0 win, while the Kiwis twice came from behind to oust Canada 3-2.

Hayden Shaw was New Zealand's hero, recording a hat-trick to emerge the highest scorer in the competition with 11 goals.

Emile Smith scored South Africa's winner six minutes before half-time to set up a semi-final meeting with defending champions Australia on Friday.

Pool champions Australia and Pakistan gained a direct entry into the semi-finals, leaving the second and third-placed teams to play-off for the remaining two spots.

The South African men made up for the disappointment of their women's team, who lost the play-off to India earlier in the day after being 3-1 up eight minutes before the final whistle.

England missed injured striker David Mathews, out for six weeks with a hamstring injury, as they fumbled repeatedly before the final whistle.

A powerful hit by Duncan Woods in the second-half rebounded off the post, but Danny Hall had himself to blame for failing to score before an empty goal in the last five minutes.

South Africa's victory margin would have been bigger if Greg Nicol, their most successful striker, had not pushed a penalty stroke wide off the target.

Rival goal-keepers Simon Mason of England and Chris Hibbert of South Africa effected brilliant saves as both sides made quick counter-moves in a fast, entertaining match.

"We played very well and defended positively," said South African coach Robert Pullen.

"It will be a big game against Australia. They are the champions and will be favoured to win."

"But we can match them if we improve our penalty corners and finishing before the goal."

England, who were hoping to better their bronze medal performance at the last Commonwealth Games in Malaysia four years ago, were devastated by the defeat.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

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12 Vicinity
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14 Carbon-hydroxyl blend
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16 Amigo
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23 Calendar abbr.
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32 Hit, on a 45-rpm record
34 Cravat
35 Nasty stinger
37 Intact
39 Press for navment

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4 Rapid gait
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7 Taj Mahal, essentially
8 Maestro
9 Point to
10 Oliver Twist's request
11 Pub orders (just gets by)
17 Space-compartment
19 Piece of work
22 Tried to fool
24 Bovine film
25 Man-mouse link
26 Address for Frenchwomen
27 String around your finger, e.g.
29 In good condition
30 Unisex shirt
33 Church section
36 Royal color
38 Apt
40 Recent (Pref.)
42 Garbage vessel
43 Actress
44 Wrestling style
46 Castle
47 High-land hillside
48 Longings
50 Neither's partner

Solution time: 21 mins.

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