

### An opening for Sehwal

INTERNET, Southampton

India are considering Virender Sehwal as an opening batsman for the first Test against England at Lord's.

The 23-year-old regularly opens for the one-day side, but has batted in the middle-order in his five Test appearances so far.

He was sent in first, however, in their final warm-up game against Hampshire and looks set to continue his partnership with Wasim Jaffer on Thursday after scores of 41 and 22.

"He is a very positive player, who will put pressure on the opposition if he gets the opportunity early," coach John Wright told the Press Trust of India.

Sehwal is one of India's brightest prospects and scored 105 in his debut Test against South Africa at Bloemfontein last November.

He followed that with half-centuries against England and Zimbabwe but missed the Test series in the West Indies earlier this year after damaging his shoulder.

India's middle-order for the Test looks settled with skipper Sourav Ganguly, Rahul Dravid, Sachin Tendulkar and Vangipurappu Laxman all certain selections.

Mohammad Kaif and Dinesh Mongia pressed their claims with half-centuries in the opening tour game against West Indies A, but to include a seventh specialist batsman would leave India with an under-strength bowling attack.

The tourists are looking for their first Test series win in England since Kapil dev's side triumphed in 1986.

### Nothing less than the WC

AFP, Barrackpore

Gritty Australian cricketer Steve Waugh stressed Tuesday he was not thinking of quitting the game despite failing to find a place in his country's one-day squad.

"I'm not thinking of retiring from cricket," said Waugh, dropped from the national one-day side early this year. He has so far scored 9,600 runs in 148 Tests and 7,569 in 325 one-dayers.

"I'm determined to get back into the one-day squad and play for my country in next year's World Cup (in South Africa)," the Australian told reporters after arriving here to do charity work for a children's leprosy home.

"Charity gives me a lot of pleasure as it fuels my energy to play more cricket. I can't ignore the children of the home, as I can't ignore cricket which has given me a lot," said Waugh, accorded a warm welcome on his arrival.

The children of the Udayan home garlanded the Australian, putting red vermilion on the forehead and touching his feet with rose powder, as per Indian traditions.

"Welcome brother Steve! We're waiting for you," shouted more than 250 boys and girls standing barefooted under the blazing midday sun in this town about 40 kilometres (25 miles) north of Calcutta, capital of eastern state of West Bengal.

Overwhelmed by the welcome, Waugh said: "I've come to see you, to help you. I've been looking for suitable land for the home in Calcutta and its outskirts throughout the day. I hope I'll find it soon."

Waugh, who has been supporting Udayan for four years, wants to build a separate home for the girls.

He also presented his bats to the home officials.

"This is a small gift to the children of the home whom I earnestly want to see successful in their lives," said Waugh.

It was a day to remember for the children.

"Our teachers allow us to watch TV only when Steve Waugh plays. His style of batting ignites our passion to do something in life," said a student.

## A city seeks solace

AFP, Manchester

Manchester hopes to finally bury the miserable and costly memory of two failed Olympic bids when it stages the 17th Commonwealth Games from Thursday.

But this northern English city knows that a successful Games could carry a bitter-sweet price - the tough realisation that London may reap the golden benefit of being awarded the 2012 Olympics.

Having lost out in the race to stage the 2000 and 2004 Olympics, Manchester is determined that the Commonwealths are not seen as a consolation Games.

However, the organisers could have been forgiven for thinking that their multi-million dollar investment is being rewarded with a firm kick in the teeth if they had heard International Olympic Committee (IOC) president Jacques Rogge.

"If Manchester goes well and if the question over a modern stadium is resolved, then you have every chance of hosting the Olympics because you have a great reputation in sport and any bid coming from the United Kingdom would be a very strong bid," Rogge said.

"I think that Manchester can change the image and produce something that's going to be very positive for future international events in the United Kingdom," said Rogge.

"I think it's definitely going to have an influence on the potential bid for London for 2012."

Sports administrators here are desperate for a successful Commonwealth Games after delays over the rebuilding of Wembley and the abandonment of the Pickett's Lock stadium plan, both in north London, which saw Britain lose the right to host the 2005 World Athletics Championships.

Manchester knows that the country's sports reputation could do

with a boost as could the Games themselves which were ravaged by a boycott the last time they were staged in Britain in Edinburgh in 1986.

Almost 6,000 athletes from 72 nations are taking part this year with the numbers representing a ten percent increase on Kuala Lumpur in 1998.

The staging of the Games hasn't come cheap though - the capital costs are expected to total 750 million dollars, a large part of which has gone into the building of Sportcity, built as part of a major rejuvenation of the city's run down eastern area.

There are some widely anticipated contests in the offing, not least courtesy of a couple of Australian superstars.

Olympic 400m champion Cathy Freeman changed her mind and decided to take part in the athletics as part of the 4x400m women's relay squad.

Freeman put on hold her preparation for the Games in May to look after husband Sandy Bodecker, who is being treated for throat cancer.

In the pool, all eyes will be on Ian Thorpe who is attempting to become the first athlete in the 72-year history of the Games to win seven gold medals.

You wouldn't bet against him. "Thorpedo" has set 16 world records and won eight world championship titles, three Olympic gold and four Commonwealth gold. And he's still only 19.

The Games are also breaking new ground - for the first time, disabled athletes will compete taking part in athletics, lawn bowls, swimming, table tennis and weightlifting.

And, in a first for any major multi-sports event, medals won by the 200 or so disabled competitors in these sports will count towards their respective countries' overall medal totals.

England, with over 400 competitors, has the largest squad while

Montserrat, with one, is the smallest.

Australia, England, Canada, South Africa and New Zealand will dominate the medals table but tiny outposts like the South Sea island Nauru and the Caribbean state of St Vincent and the Grenadines will be determined to get a look in.

They will be taking part in 16 individual sports and three team sports.

Amongst the better known British names on show will be Sydney Olympic 2000 medallists such as Jonathan Edwards, Steve Buckley, Darren Campbell and Dwain Chambers.

There are other household names - in athletics, Maria Mutola of Mozambique and Obadele Thompson from Barbados will be going for gold on the track.

Canada's Simon Whitfield, who won an Olympic Gold in the triathlon, will also be competing.

Three events at the Commonwealth Games will be virtual world championships - netball, lawn bowls and squash are largely exclusive to Commonwealth countries.

The events will take place at 15 different venues in Manchester and the northwest as well as the national shooting centre at Bisleigh in the southern county of Surrey.

Sportcity, a state-of-the-art complex built around the 38,000 capacity City of Manchester stadium, features the National Squash Centre, the National Cycling Centre and the Indoor Tennis Centre.

The stadium, which will become Manchester City football club's new home from 2003, will host the opening and closing ceremonies, all athletics events and rugby sevens.

At the last Games in Kuala Lumpur, the top five medal winners were Australia, England, Canada, Malaysia and South Africa.

But in the true spirit of the Games, little Nauru also got its name on the medals board with an impressive haul of three golds.

### U-17 coaching camp from July 27

SPORTS REPORTER

A training programme for cricketers under the age of 17 arranged by Bangladesh Cricket Board's Development Committee will be held from July 27-31.

The second batch of trainees under the programme have been asked to report to national U-17 coach Malcolm Perera at the Bangabandhu National Stadium on July 26 at 11am.

The training programme will be conducted at the indoor facilities of Abahani club.

Accommodation will be provided to participants coming from outside of Dhaka.

The following 37 youngsters have been called-up for the coaching camp:

Israqe Sonnet, Bappy Das, Masum Hossain, Tariqul Islam of Barisal; Golam Rahman Hemal, Enamul Haque, Anwar Hossain of Sylhet; Eliyas Sunny, Arifat Sunny, Oshim Chowdhury, Riyaf Khan Jonny, Mostajir Rahman of Dhaka Metro Blues; Robiul Awal Jhony, Muklesur Rahman, Fazli Rabbi, Forhad Hossain, Arif Reza, Tausif Rahman, Golam Habib, Imran Ahmed, Rafiaul Hasan, Zahid Hasan, Moniruzzaman of Rajshahi; Iftekharul Islam, Nazif Ahmed, Ibrahim Sagor, Asif Newaz, Naeem Islam, Diman Gosh, Ashiqur Rahman, Maruf Hossain, Rubayet Haque, Tanvir Rashid, Tarequzzaman, Saif Ahmed, SK Kawser Ali of Dhaka.

## Medal that never came

Football

INTERNET

It is a rare footballer who wins 18 major medals, plays in four World Cups and represents his country a record 126 times, yet still feels naggingly unfulfilled.

But then, there are few rarer talents in the game than that of Paolo Maldini.

The Italian great has won almost every major honour the club scene has to offer several times over.

But for all his *Serie A* and European Cup winner's medals, Maldini has never lifted either of the biggest international prizes in 14 years of trying.

It is strange how the Maldini family have won so much at club level, yet have nothing to show with the Italy shirt.

And with the confirmation of his decision to retire from the Italian national team at 34, that sequence will now never be broken.

The 2002 World Cup was to be the moment when the Milan legend finally struck gold for his country.

Instead, it became merely the final chapter in his tale of international disappointment as an extra-time golden goal from South Korea inflicted on Italy a shock second-round defeat.

Four years earlier, Maldini's men had lost on penalties to France in the last eight.

At USA 94, they lost the final to Brazil in the same manner.

And on home soil in 1990, it was Argentina's turn to eliminate them in a shoot-out, this time in the last four.

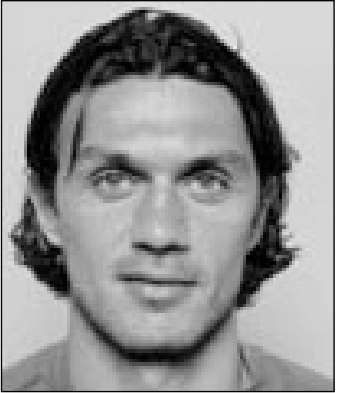
Add to that another golden goal defeat by France in the final of Euro 2000 that left him in tears and Maldini's international misery is complete.

For all the medals he has accumulated in his 17 years with AC Milan, that gap in his playing record rankles.

In fact, had Italy hung on when they were 30 seconds from victory against France in the European Championships final, he would have retired two years ago.

Maldini said in the build-up to this year's World Cup: "The fact that I've never actually won a competition with Italy gives me the motivation to try again."

But although he put himself through the mill once more, fortune



PAOLO MALDINI

## A Troussier-act to follow

Football

REUTERS, Tokyo

New Japan coach Zico is keen to build on the success the side enjoyed under Frenchman Philippe Troussier at the World Cup last month but he could do well to avoid inviting comparisons with his predecessor given his lack of experience as a first-team coach.

The 49-year-old Brazilian has told his employers at the Japan Football Association (JFA) that he wants to start his tenure as national coach with a game one month before the eagerly-awaited November 20 friendly against Argentina in Tokyo.

Zico, who had been at J-League champions Kashima Antlers as a player and technical director since 1991, had sought only a co-ordinating role until he was finally won over by the JFA and signed an initial 11-month contract on Monday.

Troussier left Japan with a legacy and Zico will be under immense pressure to keep their new-found reputation firmly intact at the 2006 World Cup in Germany.

Japan finished top of group H at the World Cup after drawing 2-2 with Belgium in their opening match and going on to beat Russia 1-0 and Tunisia 2-0, erasing the memory of losing all three games on their finals debut in 1998.

The co-hosts lost 1-0 to Turkey in the second round, but not before

proving that the JFA had been correct to stick with Troussier despite a number of highly publicised run-ins since becoming coach in September 1998.

Troussier had already led Japan to their second Asian Cup triumph in Lebanon in 2000 and the final of the Confederations Cup last year before defying the odds again at the World Cup.

Zico, who was hand-picked by new JFA president Saburo Kawabuchi, could find that Troussier is a hard act to follow.

The JFA are planning to keep Zico under contract until the end of the Asian World Cup qualifiers in 2005 with an option to extend the



ZICO

resolutely refused to smile on his final furling.

When Ahn Jung-Hwan headed home the underdogs' winner, the defender he left wrong-footed and grounded was the Italian captain himself.

There could be few crueller ways to bow out, but that rare slip will not be the abiding memory Maldini leaves behind.

Rather, the defensive master-class he had given prior to that, while nominally out of position in central defence, was a more typical taste of his versatility and enduring quality.

Maldini made his Italy debut in a friendly against Yugoslavia in 1988.

He went on to play more than 10,000 minutes of international football and was never sent off in his 126 appearances for the Azzurri.

Now the greatest left-back of his generation will limit his exhibitions of defensive technique and tactical awareness to the club stage.

The national team will have to manage without the composed leadership and calming influence of their captain, who admits he leaves with regret.

"It is strange how the Maldini family have won so much at club level, yet have nothing to show with the Italy shirt," he said.

The player his fans call "San Paolo" can at least take consolation in the knowledge that greatness is not always weighed in silver.

Cup.

Japan have already been usurped as Asia's top team by World Cup co-hosts South Korea, who beat Poland, Portugal, Italy and Spain en route to a semi-final place.

Zico must hope that Hidetoshi Nakata (Parma), Shinji Ono (Feyenoord) and Junichi Inamoto (Fulham) all prosper in Europe this season as he attempts to justify his reported dollars 1.6 million salary.

He will be praying, too, that new European arrivals Shunsuke Nakamura (Reggina) and Takayuki Suzuki (Genk) do not spend too much time on the bench.

"The World Cup players will form the base of my squad. But if they are not playing for their clubs it will be difficult for them to play for Japan," the new coach warned on Monday.

Troussier repeated a similar mantra for almost four years but, as expected, still built his team around Nakata at the World Cup despite a frosty relationship between the two men.

Zico was part of arguably the best team not to win the World Cup when Brazil went out to a Paolo Rossi hat-trick for Italy in 1982.

He knows, however, that Japan do not have the same resources as Brazil and that their results over the coming year could hinge as much on the benevolence of a handful of European clubs as on his own motivational skills.

## Lance's fingers crossed

AFP, France

For Spaniard Joseba Beloki Tuesday's Tour de France 15th stage will be a crucial test of his ambitions to finally emerge from the shadow of three-time winner Lance Armstrong on the Champs Elysees podium.

Beloki, who has finished third overall on the world's toughest bike race for the past two years, is well aware his 30-year-old American nemesis is not about to dampen his lightning pace as the race heads for three days in the Alps.

"My objective now has to be the podium (on the Champs Elysees on July 28)," said an exhausted Beloki after the gruelling 14th stage where he finished 4:05 behind stage winner Richard Virenque.

"And from now I'll have to keep an eye on (Raimondas) Rumšas."

Beloki knows his chances of catching US Postal rider Armstrong, at least if the Texan doesn't get rustled by an accident or some other damaging incident, are very slim.

And the fact that Beloki will now lessen his ambitions to keep an eye on Rumšas, a 30-year-old Lithuanian with the Lampre team, shows that he knows that the challenge will come from all sides.

Four minutes is a massive lead on the Tour, and Armstrong is glowing with a confidence that is bound to be further embellished in the Alpine stages which he knows almost by heart.

Tuesday's restart, after Monday's well-deserved rest day, will feature a number of lesser climbs before the peloton reaches the summit finish of Les Deux Alpes.

A popular tourist destination in both summer and winter, the town has featured only once on the Tour's itinerary - in 1998 when Marco Pantani, the then reigning Tour champion, soared to victory over a struggling Jan Ullrich.



PHOTO: AFP

American Lance Armstrong gets an inspiring-hug from wife Kristen before a training session during a rest day on July 22 before the 15th stage of the 89th Tour de France in Saint-Paul-les-Trois-Châteaux.

### Powell propels West Indies A

AFP, Birmingham

Fast bowler Darren Powell had figures of 3 for 55 in West Indies A's 119-run victory over Warwickshire in their three-day match at Edgbaston here on Monday.

Jamaican Powell had the best haul, with Tino Best making 2-40 and Ryan Hinds 2-47 during an impressive display by the tourists.

Mark Wagh managed to make 86 in perhaps the best effort by Warwickshire against the West Indies' onslaught. Batsmen Dominic Ostler and Dougie Brown also put in solid displays for the home side but they never looked like going on to claim victory.

James Spies and Alexander Allen tried their best at the end before Hinds trapped Spies leg before just as time was running out.

After a rain-affected first day, the hosts had tried to fashion a result by declaring on 123 for six in their first innings, a massive 235 behind the Windies' total of 358, and the tourists took advantage with another assured performance with bat and ball.

Resuming on 72 for three, the Windies reached 135 for three with an unbeaten knock of 54 from Gareth Brees and 37 from Dwayne Bravo before declaring to set Warwickshire a considerable target of 371.

The home side started badly as skipper Michael Powell departed with just 17 on the board but Wagh's contribution and 35 from Brown helped them reach 163 for five.

But when Wagh fell for 86, trapped lbw by Brees, to leave the Bears on 218 for seven there was no way back and the visitors raced in to finish off the tail.

**CROSSWORD** By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS  
 1 Funny folks  
 5 Anderson's "High —"  
 8 Dressed  
 12 A Baldwin  
 13 Carnival locale  
 14 Hop-scotch goal  
 15 "SNL" alumna  
 16 City on the Danube  
 17 Acknowledge  
 18 Go like Jack and Jill  
 20 Thin, in a way  
 22 Go after an apple  
 23 Internet  
 24 Role for Calista  
 27 Advice to the —  
 32 Court  
 33 One (Frel.)  
 34 Sailor assent  
 35 Parlor piece  
 38 Dither

DOWN  
 1 Desire  
 2 Felipe of baseball  
 3 Micro-job  
 25 Old card game  
 26 17th-century English poet  
 6 Grease  
 7 Cavort  
 8 Wedding venue, often  
 9 The Pacific  
 56 Antelope's playmate  
 57 Commercial  
 58 Porthos' piercer  
 10 Love (Lat.)  
 11 Like the lawn at morn  
 19 "Behold!" purveyor  
 21 Idolater's emotion  
 10 Love enigger  
 37 "Green eggs and ham"  
 38 Bagel type  
 41 "— Confidential"  
 42 Chopin's companion  
 43 "I cannot tell —"  
 44 Herbert Hoover's birthplace  
 45 Witticism  
 47 Incite  
 48 Facility  
 51 Awful

**CRYPTOQUIP**

X BEMZP KYVXEFGZWBBLP.  
 HJW XW XOE'W Y HX F  
 GYLW ZD KP IXDB. XW'O  
 MJOW VXIE WKKB.

**Yesterday's Cryptquip:** I'M AWFULLY UNTIDY WHEN EATING AND SURFING THE NET. MY COMPUTER IS FULL OF CHIPS.  
 Today's Cryptquip Clue: W equals T

The Cryptquip 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.