

Hopes revolve round Hanif

AFP, Karachi

Former Pakistani Test legend Hanif Mohammad has been appointed batting coach to the national side for upcoming tours to Zimbabwe and South Africa in a bid to reverse their woeful recent record at the crease, the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) said Friday.

"The objective is to improve the technique and patience of the batsmen in the current team and Hanif was a champion in both these areas," PCB media spokesman Samiul Hasan said.

"Hanif will serve as batting coach during the two-match Test series in Zimbabwe and then fly to South Africa for two Tests in December."

Pakistan was dismissed for their lowest-ever Test scores of 59 and 53 during their 3-0 routing by Australia in Sharjah in the United Arab Emirates earlier this month.

Pakistan has also been struggling to find an opening pair, having torn through eight different ones in the last 18 months.

"I would be pleased to help the youngsters and have seen them at regional academies. They have promise and potential," Hanif told the news agency.

"The youngsters need to learn some basic things, like patience and the requirements of international cricket, and I hope they will learn fast."

Hanif, 67, one of four Mohammad brothers who have represented Pakistan, played 55 Tests for Pakistan and tallied 3,915 runs.

His best-ever score of 337 was netted against the West Indies during the 1957-58 season in an innings that lasted a Test record time of 990 minutes.

He also hit 499 runs in a first class match in 1958-59, which stood as a record until West India's Brian Lara surpassed it in a 1994 English county match.

"The decision has been conveyed to Pakistan's team coach Richard Pybus and he is delighted to know that he will be working with a legend," the PCB spokesman said.

Pakistan's 15-man squad left for Zimbabwe Thursday night and will start their tour with a four-day game against Zimbabwe 'A' in Harare from November 4.

Target turnaround

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TEST: Waqar Younis (captain), Inzamam-ul-Haq, Taufeeq Umar, Shahid Afridi, Salim Elahi, Yousuf Youhana, Hasan Raza, Faisal Iqbal, Younis Khan, Rashid Latif, Kamran Akmal, Shoaib Akhtar, Muhammad Sami, Muhammad Zahid, Saqlain Mushtaq.

ONE-DAY: Waqar Younis (captain), Inzamam-ul-Haq, Taufeeq Umar, Shahid Afridi, Salim Elahi, Yousuf Youhana, Misbah-ul-Haq, Faisal Iqbal, Younis Khan, Rashid Latif, Kamran Akmal, Wasim Akram, Azhar Mahmood, Shoaib Akhtar, Muhammad Zahid, Saqlain Mushtaq.

England

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match between Queensland and England at Allan Border Field here on Saturday.

QUEENSLAND: First innings Maherc Butcher b Caddick 41 Nash c Trescott b Caddick 18 Love not out 124 Law c and b Flintoff 68 Symonds c Stewart b Flintoff 47 Carseldine not out 14 Extras: (lb-6, w-2, nb-13) 21 Total: (for 4 wks in 90 overs) 333 Fall of wickets: 1-60, 2-65, 3-193, 4-238

Bowler O M R W Caddick 19 4 53 2 Hoggard 15 2 65 0 Jones 16 0 65 0 Flintoff 18 1 61 2 Giles 20 3 67 0 Butcher 2 0 16 0

Kiwi pay crisis goes on

Cricket

AFP, Wellington

Hopes of a resolution in New Zealand cricket's pay strike dissolved Friday night when Players Association spokesman Rob Nichol labelled New Zealand Cricket's final offer "cowardly", the Dominion Post reported Saturday.

The players' demand is for a 60 per cent or 2.7 million NZ dollar (1.3 million US) increase but NZC's latest offer is 450,000 or just over five per cent.

If the players do not budge then NZC will attempt individual contracts for the best possible team to play India in the first Test, starting at Wellington's Basin Reserve on December 12.

"The players must now choose whether they wish to be involved in our first-class programme," NZC

chief executive Martin Snedden said.

"If there are players who don't want to be involved we will simply move on and use the services of those who do. I will use whatever players are available to keep cricket operating in this country."

New Zealand Cricket has offered the players an extra 300,000 NZ dollars (145,000 US) and wants a response by Tuesday afternoon otherwise it will suspend negotiations, approach players directly, cancel the Max and review the first-class programme.

Snedden's latest offer would see top domestic players earn up to 37,500 NZ dollars (18,000 US) an increase of 5,000 NZ dollars (2,400 US) on the original offer.

Snedden said he was unsure where the extra 300,000 NZ dollars (144,000 US) would come out of its budget, but admitted grassroots cricket and some elite programmes would be affected.

"I'm facing what I think is a major crisis for cricket at the moment. I'm trying to resolve a major impasse. I'm recognising the harm that's doing to cricket."

Nichol said the presentation of NZC's offer resembled a deal with a loaded gun behind it and called it a desperate attempt to test the resolve of his players, the Post said.

"It's been packaged as a threat and is nothing short of bully tactics and cowardly," Nichol said.

Nichol also said NZC was set to receive more money, up to 25 million NZ dollars (12 million US), from a five-year International Cricket Council deal than it was letting on.

But Snedden rebuffed the claim. He said: "Anyone who has read those figures would know that, although we are scheduled to receive large lump-sum payments in the future, they are just part of our four-year plan and are needed to offset the much smaller annual turnovers in subsequent years."

SL in solid position

AFP, Lenasia

Sri Lanka batted itself into a solid position Friday after the complete loss of the morning session in the first of a four-day match against the Rest of South Africa, played at the Lenasia Stadium outside Johannesburg.

The tourists won the toss and elected to bat on a soggy pitch after rain seeped under the covers, making play impossible during the morning session.

When the players came off nearly five overs early because of bad light Mahela Jayawardene and Hashan Tillakaratne had put on an unbeaten fifth-wicket partnership of 89.

The majority of the top order got among the runs but they failed to convert them into a substantial innings, the SAPA news agency reported.

It was a disastrous start for Russel Arnold as he found himself snared in front by Garnett Kruger with the last ball of the first over.

Kruger struck again in the 20th over, running out Kumar Sangakkara -- 40 off 52 deliveries -- with a direct hit.

His accuracy broke up a dangerous second-wicket partnership of 77 that had developed with opener Marvin Atapattu.

Atapattu whose innings was slightly more subdued -- 36 off 82 balls with five boundaries -- followed with the addition of only one more run -- caught by Jon Kent at first-slip off Pierre Joubert.

The tea interval proved to be the downfall of captain Sanath Jayasuriya, still feeling the effects of the dislocated shoulder sustained in a tournament in Morocco.

His 33 struck off 47 balls, 28 coming in boundaries, contained some glorious strokes off both the front and back foot, but going for one boundary too many, he was caught in the covers by Hashim Amla, seven balls after the break.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at close of play on the first day of the four-day cricket tour match between the Rest of South Africa and Sri Lanka at the Lenasia Stadium on Friday:

Table with columns: Sri Lanka, Rest of South Africa, Bowler, O, M, R, W. Includes players like Atapattu, Kruger, Sangakkara, Jayawardene, Jayasuriya, Tillakaratne, and bowlers like Kruger, Abraham, Joubert, Kops, Kent, De Lange, Henderson.

Table with columns: Bowler, O, M, R, W. Includes players like Kruger, Abraham, Joubert, Kops, Kent, De Lange, Henderson.

Pohrer in World Open squash final

REUTERS, Doha

Natalie Pohrer shocked new world number one Carol Owens by fighting back to reach squash's World Open final on Friday.

The third seed looked to be heading for a straight games defeat but saved two match points before coming through 5-9, 2-9, 9-5, 9-1, 10-8, describing her victory as "my most magical moment."

Pohrer, a South Africa-raised, US-domiciled English player, turned the contest around with the time-honoured tactic of moving a step or two further forward to take the ball early and occupy the centre of the court.

Job only half

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Indian opener Sunil Gavaskar. But it was his first three-figure score in 11 attempts at Calcutta.

"I'm obviously delighted to get my maiden century in Calcutta," he said. "This is kind of the home of Indian cricket and earlier I used to always go away disappointed."

Tendulkar, who had previously failed to pass 50 in the series, said he was under no extra pressure to score runs but said there was a lot of expectation.

"There is no extra pressure on me but expectations are very high," he said. "Even when I sneeze people ask why I sneeze."

The 29-year-old won praise from West Indies batsman Marlon Samuels, who had struck 104 for his maiden Test century to get West Indies to a commanding position earlier in the day.

"Sachin is the best batsman in the world," the 21-year-old Samuels said. "The way he lifts the team and the way he bats. Watching him play helps me in my batting."

The Jamaican was thrilled at getting his hundred and said he was confident West Indies, already 2-0 down in the series, would emerge victorious on Sunday.

"I always wanted to score a century. The feeling is very good," he said.

"We are looking forward to winning this match. We have to get the remaining batsmen out and I'm sure we will do that."



Spaniard Carlos Moya raises his arms after beating American Andre Agassi in the quarterfinals of the Paris Masters Series tennis tournament on November 1.

Lleyton sails, Andre fails

Tennis

REUTERS, Paris

World number one Lleyton Hewitt cruised into the semifinals of the Paris Masters with a clinical 6-4, 6-4 victory over Roger Federer while Andre Agassi crashed out to Carlos Moya by the same score.

Hewitt was upstaged later, however, when Thailand's Paradorn Srichaphan won the battle of the big hitters, outgunning American Andy Roddick 7-6, 7-6.

Paradorn, who will play Hewitt on Saturday, extended his winning streak to nine matches after a hugely entertaining clash on centre court that included 33 aces.

"Everything's working, he looks unbeatable," said Hewitt of the Thai who beat him convincingly in Tokyo last month. Agassi, who at 32 is bidding to become the oldest player to end the year as world number one, was outplayed by Moya as the Spaniard guaranteed his qualification for the Masters Cup in Shanghai with an near-flawless performance.

The 1998 French Open winner will play third seed Marat Safin in the semi-final after the powerful Russian ended French hopes at the tournament with a 6-3, 5-7, 6-3 defeat of the unseeded Nicolas Escude.

Agassi, the only man who can catch Hewitt in the Champions Race, started poorly against Moya, failing to find his range from the baseline as his opponent ran him all over the court to take the first set in 32 minutes.

Moya broke early in the second before Agassi finally sparked into life.

He broke back after chasing down a dropshot and the pumped-up American then received a warning for an audible obscenity after umpire Cedric Mourier overruled a first serve at 30-30. It was one of several decisions to go against Agassi.

For a while the seven-times grand slam winner threatened to turn the match around but Moya broke serve again to lead 4-3 and, after saving three break points at 5-4, served out for what he described as "one of the best victories of my career."

Agassi was generous in his praise of the 10th-seeded Spaniard, but was scathing in his criticism of the umpire.

"Carlos played better than me today, end of story," he said. "But, when an umpire overrules three

times on first serves and twice at 30-all, I just think that's bad judgement. Fundamentally struggle with that."

Asked what he had said to the umpire in a frosty exchange at the end of the one-hour-21-minute contest, Agassi replied: "I told him he did a pathetic job."

For 26-year-old Moya, winner of four ATP titles this year, the season just gets better and better.

"Tactically I played very well today," said the Spaniard. "I'm very proud of this match. I think it was probably my best ever, especially indoors."

"After beating (Sebastien) Grosjean I went to bed at three o'clock in the morning and couldn't sleep well. I thought I was going to be really tired but I ran like crazy out there."

"I don't know what would have happened if it had gone to a third set -- he probably would have won."

Hewitt had few alarms against a strangely hesitant Federer, breaking one in each set to wrap up a straightforward victory.

Switzerland's Federer wasted five break points in the first set as his usual fluency deserted him while the 21-year-old Hewitt ruthlessly took his chances when they came along.

Jifar hopes for another

Athletics

REUTERS, New York

His first name means "my hope" in his native Ethiopia, and for Tesfaye Jifar, his hope is to successfully defend the men's title in Sunday's New York City Marathon.

Last year, Jifar pulled away from Kenya's Japhet Kosegei with three miles remaining in the 26.2-mile race and in the process, broke Jamaican's 12-year-old record by 18 seconds with a time of 2:07:43.

Although he had to remain focused down the stretch with victory in his grasp, Jifar was appreciative of the thousands of supporters who lined the course, often waving and smiling as he eventually crossed the finish line in Manhattan's Central Park in record-breaking time.

"I only believed I won when I reached the tape," Jifar said.

In becoming the first Ethiopian to triumph in New York, Jifar cemented his status as one of Ethiopia's great runners after remaining in the shadow of his brother Habte and legendary runner Belayneh Densimo for several years.

For Jifar, overcoming adversity is nothing new, considering he has lived more than half his life with only one eye.

Jifar was one of 13 children who grew up in the village city of Addis Ababa in Ethiopia's central highlands. At age 11 he was gored by a bull and lost his right eye after his parents could not afford proper medical care for the injury.

As a teenager Jifar started running with his brother, a former world champion 10,000-meter finalist, and made his first national team in 1999 at the World Half-Marathon Championships in Palermo, finishing third.

Later that year, Jifar truly made a mark not only in his country but worldwide by finishing second at the Amsterdam Marathon, breaking Densimo's national and world record by one second with a time of 2:06:49.

Jifar, 26, has competed in just three events since his New York victory, including a disappointing ninth at the London Marathon in April.

In his last race, he placed fifth at the World Championships Half-Marathon in May, clocking in at 1:01:11.

The poor showing in London was what fuelled Jifar's preparations for New York.

Running in the high elevations of his country since May, Jifar is more than ready to defend his title in what promises to be a hotly contested race.

"It's like a soldier going off to the battlefield," Jifar said. "You can't slacken. You have to be alert and ready to go."

Jifar says his blindness does not force him to look sideways while he runs. In fact, his eyes far from what he feels is the biggest factor in how he will do Sunday.

"It's whatever my body orders me to do at a given time," he said.

Accustomed to the stifling heat in the Ethiopian highlands, Jifar and the other 30,000 participants will have to deal with chilly temperatures that will hover around 40 degrees Fahrenheit come Sunday.

"I don't like the cold," Jifar said. "I'll deal with it, just like everyone else."

A devout Orthodox Christian, Jifar reads a lot of religious books and attends church in his homeland regularly, spending almost as much time in prayer as he does at home.

In fact, Jifar believes that whether he becomes the seventh repeat champion in New York history will be determined by a higher power.

"More than anything I feel the desire to repeat, but the one who knows the real outcome is God," he said.

Tendulkar starts TV innings Nov 5

PRESS RELEASE

Sachin Tendulkar has delivered some of the most memorable performances on the cricket field and now for the first time ever ESPN STAR Sports gives its millions of cricket crazy viewers the unique opportunity to get into the razor-sharp mind of the world's top cricketing genius to find out the way he thinks and analyses the game of cricket.

Cricket icon Sachin Tendulkar opens his television innings exclusively on ESPN and STAR Sports, with two new exciting weekly programmes: 'India Vs.' and 'Sachin Speaks On World Cup Stars' which he analyses the teams and the stars in a lead up to the cricket World Cup.

In 'India Vs.', Sachin provides his perspective on various teams participating in the forthcoming World Cup. In each hour-long episode of India Vs., Sachin examines India's past performances against an international team and then goes on to evaluate India's chances against that team in the forthcoming World Cup.

'India Vs.' features the best teams in the game, covering great cricketing nations like Australia, South Africa, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, New Zealand, England, West Indies, Zimbabwe and Kenya. India Vs. will air every Tuesday at 9 pm on STAR Sports starting November 5, with a repeat telecast on ESPN every Wednesday at 8:30 pm.

In 'Sachin Speaks On World Cup Stars', Sachin Tendulkar will share his assessment of the world's top cricketers.

Besides Sachin, cricketing greats like Carl Hooper, Heath Streak, Andy Flower, Stephen Fleming, Chris Harris, Shaun Pollock, Allan Donald and Jacques Kallis also offer insights on their contemporaries. Sachin Speaks On World Cup Stars will be aired on ESPN every Thursday at 8:30 pm starting on November 7 with repeat telecast every Friday on STAR Sports at 9:30 pm.

Both the programmes have been shot in an interesting format where ace commentator, Harsha Bhogle with his unique interviewing style quizzes the 'Master Blaster' on contemporary cricketers and international cricketing teams, and Sachin offers his sincere opinion quoting his personal presence at each situation being discussed.

Comments from the ESPN STAR Sports 'A Few Good Men' team comprising of greats like Sunil Gavaskar, Bobby Simpson, Ravi Shastri, Navjot Singh Sidhu and Harsha himself add great depth to the programme.

Sachin India's saviour

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while going for quick runs in order to give enough time to their pacemen to bowl the opposition out.

Chanderpaul added four to his overnight 136 before being surprised by the bounce of a Sehwa delivery as he cut it straight to Harbhajan at point in the day's first over. He struck one six and 17 runs in his 258-ball knock.

Samuels, 89 overnight, completed his hundred when he on-drove leg-spinner Anil Kumble for a single before being caught by Sehwa at forward short-leg off Harbhajan.

The 21-year-old Jamaican hit 18 fours in his 182-ball knock and shared a 195-run stand for the sixth wicket with Chanderpaul.

Kumble took two of the last three wickets to finish with 3-169.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at stumps on the fourth day of the third and final cricket Test between India and the West Indies at the Eden Gardens here on Saturday:

INDIA: First innings 358 (S. Bangar 77, M. Dillon 3-82)

WEST INDIES: First innings (overnight 446-5) Gayle c Sehwa b Kumble 88 Hinds c Ganguly b Harbhajan 100 Sarwan st Patel b Harbhajan 2 Dillon b Harbhajan 0 Chanderpaul c Harbhajan b Sehwa 140 Hooper c Patel b Nehra 19 Samuels c Sehwa b Harbhajan 104 Jacobs not out 22 Powell lbw b Kumble 0 Lawson lbw b Kumble 5 Cuffy c Laxman b Harbhajan 0 Extras: (b-4, lb-7, nb-6) 17 Total: (all out in 171.3 overs) 497 Fall of wickets: 1-172, 2-186, 3-186, 4-213, 5-255, 6-450, 7-469, 8-470, 9-496.

Table with columns: Bowler, O, M, R, W. Includes players like Srinath, Nehra, Harbhajan, Kumble, Bangar, Tendulkar, Sehwa.

INDIA: Second innings Bangar c Chanderpaul b Dillon 0 Sehwa c Chanderpaul b Dillon 10 Dravid lbw b Powell 17 Tendulkar not out 114 Ganguly lbw b Cuffy 16 Laxman not out 30 Extras: (b-4, lb-4) 8 Total: (for 4 wks in 64 overs) 195 Fall of wickets: 1-0, 2-11, 3-49, 4-87.

Table with columns: Bowler, O, M, R, W. Includes players like Dillon, Cuffy, Lawson, Powell, Hooper, Gayle, Sarwan, Samuels.

Umpires: David Shepherd (Eng) and Asoka de Silva (Sri) TV umpire: Avi Jayaprakash (Ind) Match referee: Mike Proctor (Rsa)

TT World Cup

Boll, Kong face off

AFP, Beijing

German champion Tim Boll is headed for a showdown against Chinese star Kong Linghui in the 2002 table tennis Men's World Cup singles tournament after beating veteran Zoran Primorac of Croatia 4-3 in the semifinal Saturday.

Boll, who ranked third in the world, fought a seesaw battle 11-9, 5-11, 11-3, 12-14, 1-11 until he took the sixth game 11-4 over the two-time World Cup winner Primorac in China's northeastern city of Jinan.

As the highest-ranked European player, Boll led in the final game and kept the momentum to 11-8, denying the 33-year-old Croatian's hope of claiming his third World Cup title.

Suffering from chronic shoulder injury, Olympic and world champion Kong appeared not in his best shape but was good enough to beat the world's No. 4 Werner Schlager of Austria 4-2 (11-2, 5-11, 11-7, 11-9, 5-11, 11-9).

Waugh whacks

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with the bat for NSW were Michael Clarke, who scored a quickfire 48 from 43 balls, Test skipper Steve Waugh, who made 47 and one-day international Michael Bevan, who scored 46.

Mark Waugh's replacement in the Australian Test team, SA skipper Darren Lehmann, was also impressive, top-scoring with 83 from 99 balls.

Mixed day

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Bosnia and Herzegovina joined Romania. The three countries scored easy wins.

Hungary gained a 3.5-5 win over Slovenia A, The Netherlands, led by Ivan Sokolov, whipped England 3-1 and Bosnia derailed Spain by the same score.

Armenia, Belarus, Georgia and the Czech Republic have 18.5 points. It was a fortunate day for Armenia, who salvaged a 2-2 decision against Belarus.

WOMEN Finally, a window of opportunity opened for China.

In a tactical match, China crushed France 3-0 and made the battle for the division close once more.

Zhu Chen, Xu Yuhua and Zhao Xue, who is shaping up as the revelation of the Chinese team, proved too much for the Frenchwomen. They won sharp, well-contested games against the trio of Almira Skripchenko-Lautier, youngster Marie Sebag and Rosa Tel-Lamland.

The Chinese team has 16 points, only half-a-point ahead of Georgia, who were held to a 1.5-1.5 draw by Russia.

Russia and the United States, who whipped Kazakhstan 3-1, have 15 points. Romania, which settled for a draw against Germany, has 14.5 points.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down. Includes clues like '41 Trudge along', '43 Actor', '5 Hot tub', etc.

Cryptogram puzzle with a grid and clues. Includes clues like '24 Officeholders', '25 Photo', '27 Kennel outcry', etc.