



ALL QUIET ON THE TRANSFER FRONT: Officials sit idle as no cricketer turned up for inter-club transfers in the morning of the third and final day at the National Sports Council yesterday.

Darren's Judgement Day



AFP, Melbourne

Australian Darren Lehmann will receive no special consideration just because he could miss crucial games at the World Cup when International Cricket Council (ICC) match referee Clive Lloyd decides Saturday the penalty to impose for his racist comment.

Lehmann reportedly referred to Sri Lankan players as "black" in a two-word obscenity shouted by him when entering the Australian dressing room after being marginally run out in a tri-nation series one-day clash with Sri Lanka in Brisbane Wednesday.

Lehmann, 33 next month, could face a ban of up to eight one-day matches if found guilty, threatening his participation in the World Cup, cricket's four-yearly showpiece, starting in South Africa and Zimbabwe next month.

Lloyd, a former West Indies captain, will adjudicate when the ICC charge against Lehmann is heard in Adelaide, South Australia, Saturday.

Lloyd, who led one of the greatest teams in the sport's history, said all players knew the risk they took if they breached the code of conduct.

That Lehmann could miss a number of important games in the

World Cup was irrelevant to the hearing.

"I really can't think 'Well, we have the World Cup coming up'," he told Melbourne radio station 3AW.

"They knew that before. Anyone who transgresses now knows they can lose big time."

He said he had no qualms about being a one-man jury in the case.

"This is probably the highest level (offence) we've had at this time, but it's no problem," Lloyd said. "I'll be able to handle it."

He said he and the Sri Lankans had already accepted Lehmann's apology and would have taken no further action had the ICC not charged him after Lloyd had considered the case closed.

Lloyd said he had never heard similar racist comments during his long career.

"It's not something I've encountered while playing," Lloyd said.

"I think as cricketers ... we have to guard against such things."

"We are ambassadors for our country, and the game really. The game has gone through quite a dramatic period over the past couple of years, so we have to guard against those things."

Lehmann is captain of the South Australian state side and one of Australia's most experienced batsmen.

He is understood to have been bitterly disappointed by his dismissal in a match marking his return

after a lengthy absence through illness.

Australian coach John Buchanan said Friday there would be no long-term repercussions for Lehmann's career as a consequence of the controversy.

"Darren has fought his way back into the side and obviously he's had a couple of setbacks ... it's not ideal, but I can't see it jeopardising his future career," Buchanan said.

Buchanan said Lehmann regretted his outburst.

"Nobody condones the language. But from our point of view the important part was that Darren made the apology as quickly as he possibly could, a written apology as well ... he addressed the issue at the time and in the appropriate way."

"We thought the matter was handled, but the ICC weren't satisfied with that, and they have laid the charge."

"The ICC have chosen to do that, they are the power of cricket so that is their choice, that is the way they have decided to go."

Buchanan said he hoped the controversy would not destabilise the Australians leading into the tri-nation series finals and the World Cup.

"Any issue has the potential to destabilise the team," he said.

SPORT

Daniela eyes revenge



AFP, Melbourne

Daniela Hantuchova is eyeing a revenge date with Venus Williams after gliding into the Australian Open fourth round here Friday.

The Slovakian eighth seed, who has earned unwanted comparisons with Anna Kournikova after making appearances as a catwalk model in Europe, was a comfortable 6-4, 6-2 winner over Australia's Samantha Stosur.

Though the 19-year-old Monaco-based right-hander said she was not looking beyond her fourth round date with Switzerland's Patty Schnyder on Sunday, she admitted the prospect of a return with Williams excited her.

Hantuchova made a name for herself at last season's Australian Open when she took Williams to three sets in the third round before losing 3-6, 6-0, 6-4 and is due to meet the second seed in the

quarterfinals.

"I remember a lot from that match last year," Hantuchova said. "I can't say that it was a breakthrough - I didn't beat her. But that match gave me a lot of confidence."

"I was very close to beating her and I'm hoping to get to play her and do a little better than I did last year. That match gave me a lot of confidence for the whole year."

Hantuchova earlier this week bristled at being compared to Russian glamour-girl Kournikova, who bowed out in the second round and is now languishing in 42nd place on the world rankings.

"I'm a totally different person to her," Hantuchova said. "I think I'm proving with my results that tennis remains for me my number one priority," she added.

Hantuchova acknowledged she is likely to create a stir in the media regardless of how she plays.

"I just think it's something that people are always going to talk about. As long as they can talk about my tennis as much as they do about these things, I will be happy."



Daniela Hantuchova of Slovakia hits a return against Samantha Stosur of Australia yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Andre tames

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"All of the opportunities I got in this match I missed," said Escude. "That's why I lost."

In the women's draw, second seed Venus Williams and former world number one Lindsay Davenport advanced safely after overcoming low-ranked opponents.

Williams beat German world number 69 Anca Borna 6-1, 6-4 and ninth seed Davenport downing Russia's Tatiana Panova 6-2, 6-1.

Williams will now meet Nicole Pratt on Sunday after the Australian kept up the good showing by the host nation's women players to knock out Argentinian 23rd seed Paola Suarez 7-5, 6-4.

Williams admitted afterwards that her knack of raising her game had rescued her as she grappled with her serve against Barna, who was left ruing the fact that she could only convert two of 12 break points.

"In the first set I was playing really well, sticking to my game plan," said Williams.

"I think in the second set she lifted the level of her game. She started getting a lot of balls over the net."

"I kind of started missing. But at 4-1 I decided to miss a lot less than I had and it helped," Williams said.

"It was a little hot out there. It

wouldn't have been extremely nice to go to a third set but I was willing to do whatever it takes."

There were no such problems for Davenport, who will meet fifth seed Justin Henin-Hardenne in the last 16 on Sunday. Henin-Hardenne overwhelmed Katarina Srebotnik of Slovenia 6-2, 6-0 in her third round match.

Davenport extended her winning record over 24th-seeded Panova to four straight wins in flawless fashion, keeping the stocky Russian on the back foot with a series of weighty forehand winners.

The 26-year-old Californian had laboured through her second round match against Iroda Tulyaganova on Wednesday, being taken to three sets by Uzbekistan's Asian Games gold medalist.

But she looked a different proposition altogether against Panova, ruthlessly dictating play.

"It was a great match for me to play," Davenport said. "I played exactly the way I wanted to play, which was attacking a lot of balls and going for my shots. Today they were falling in."

Sunday's fourth round pits Davenport against Henin-Hardenne for the first time since they met in Zurich last October, when the Belgian accused the American of gamesmanship in faking an injury on her way to defeat.

Davenport said she would not be bearing a grudge against an opponent she has never lost to.

"I laughed about it a little bit because I won the first set, and then I got hurt, so I wasn't quite sure why she thought I would fake it," recalled Davenport. "It's definitely something I'm not known for."

In the men's draw Friday, Escude's compatriot Sebastien Grosjean booked his place in the next round with a straight sets defeat of Ecuador's Nicolas Lapentti. Grosjean, seeded 12, beat his 24th seeded opponent 6-1, 6-3, 6-3.

Spanish eighth seed Albert Costa was upset by compatriot Felix Mantilla, losing 3-6, 6-3, 4-6, 6-1, 6-3.

Unseeded Mark Philippoussis' dreams of winning a Grand Slam title in his hometown were put on hold for another year at least when he was downed by Sargis Sargsian, the Armenian winning 5-7, 7-5, 6-0, 6-4.

Pollock wants

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what he termed "surprises" by some of the lesser teams.

"Any one-day game is always a bit of a lottery," he said.

Pollock added he hoped that top players like Australia's Glenn McGrath, Shane Warne, Brian Lara of the West Indies and Sri Lanka's Muttiah Muralitharan would be injury-free for the tournament.

"From our point of view, we want to play against the best players from around the world and that they will be at the event. We hope that all those injured at the moment will have recovered in time," Pollock said.

"You want to compete against the best, you want to beat the best," he added.

Gladstone thanks ICC

AFP, London

Former England bowler Gladstone Small on Thursday welcomed an ICC move to discipline Darren Lehmann after the Australia batsman admitted verbally abusing Sri Lankan opponents.

Small, one of the first black cricketers to represent England, said the sport's world governing body was right to take a headline on incidents involving allegations of racism.

"They need to be seen to be policing the game properly," Small, now an official with England's Professional Cricketers Association, told AFP.

"Incidents like this must not be allowed to get out of hand."

Tasmania

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Jon Moss (nine) and Ian Harvey (five) will carry Victoria's hopes of completing their first Shield success in Hobart for 17 years.



PHOTO: STAR

Winners of the GrameenPhone International Junior Tennis Championships pose with their trophies at the Ramna National Tennis Complex yesterday.

Khulna double celebration

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Saiful c Shafaq b Tareq 0
Bikash not out 0
Extras: (lb-8, nb-3, w-4) 15
Total: (All out in 29.4 overs) 79
Fall of wickets: 1-9, 2-33, 3-38, 4-59, 5-61, 6-75, 7-75, 8-77, 9-79.
Bowler O M R W
Shafaq 8 2 15 3
Aminul jr 5 0 22 0
Mushfiq 6 1 17 1
Nuruzzaman 7 2 14 1
Tareq 3.4 1 3 4
RAJSHAH
Rafique not out 51
Jamilul c masud b Bikash 5
Nuruzzaman c Fahim b Bikash 0
Mustadir c Kadir b Neeyamur 6
Mushfiq not out 3
Extras: (b-4, lb-3, nb-2, w-6) 15
Total: (For 3 wkts in 24.4 overs) 80
Fall of wickets: 1-19, 2-19, 3-38.
Bowler O M R W
Saiful 6 1 9 0
Bikash 8 3 18 2
Neeyamur 4 0 15 1
Masud 3 0 10 0
Rashedul 2 1 1 0
Fahim 1.4 0 10 0
Result: Rajshahi won by seven wickets.

Man-of-the-match: Tarequil Islam.
Khulna v Sylhet
Venue: Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium
KhULNA
Raju b Rezaul 7
Niaz lbw b Rajin 65
Salim st Mabud b Imtiaz 28
Asadullah c & b Imtiaz 14
Hasanuzzaman c Rana b Rajin 34
Manzarul b Rajin 3
Monirul b Rezaul 5
Razzak b Rezaul 0
Al-Amin not out 0
Extras: (b-3, lb-1, nb-3, w-15) 22
Total: (For 9 wkts in 44 overs) 204
Fall of wickets: 1-24, 2-113, 3-117, 4-152, 5-157, 6-187, 7-195, 8-195, 9-204
Bowler O M R W
Rezaul 9 2 33 3
Nasir 5 0 34 0
Enamul jr 9 0 29 0
Parvez 4 0 22 0
Imtiaz 8 0 43 2
Rajin 9 0 39 3
SYLHET
Mabud lbw b Razzak 25
Imtiaz lbw b Masud 1
Parvez lbw b Masud 10

Nasirul b Razzak	13
Taqirul b Masud	1
Rajin lbw b Jamaluddin	20
Mowla b Manzarul	14
Rana b Manzarul	11
Rezaul not out	3
Nasir c Al-Amin b Manzarul	0
Enamul jr b Manzarul	3
Extras: (b-4, lb-2, w-26)	32
Total: (All out in 38.1 overs)	133
Fall of wickets: 1-19, 2-54, 3-58, 4-60, 5-84, 6-99, 7-123, 8-129, 9-130	
Bowler O M R W	
Al-Amin 6 1 20 0	
Masud 9 0 35 3	
Razzak 8 0 26 2	
Jamaluddin 9 1 30 1	
Manzarul 6.1 1 16 4	
Result: Khulna won by 71 runs.	
Man-of-the-match: Niaz Murshed (Khulna).	
ONE-DAY POINTS TABLE	
Team	M W L Pts
Dhaka	5 4 1 8
Khulna	5 4 1 8
Rajshahi	5 3 2 6
Sylhet	5 3 2 6
Chittagong	5 1 4 2
Barisal	5 0 5 0

Cahill his inspiration

AFP, Melbourne

Andre Agassi says his Australian coach Darren Cahill has brought inspiration and focus to his game.

The 32-year-old American tennis great repulsed Frenchman Nicolas Escude in four sets at the Australian Open on Friday to reach the last 16 in the tournament.

Cahill began coaching Andre Agassi last February after having been dumped as coach of Australia's world No.1 Lleyton Hewitt just after last year's Australian Open.

Agassi, bidding to become only the fourth man to win four Australian titles, said hiring Cahill to replace long-time mentor Brad Gilbert was proving to be one of the best things that had happened in his magnificent career.

"He's added a tremendous amount ... last year, I left here not only in jeopardy of maybe never playing the game of tennis again, but I left here losing (the title) at the Australian Open," said Agassi.

Agassi withdrew on the opening morning of last year's Open with a wrist injury after winning the Grand Slam in 2000 and 2001.

"For him to step in and say 'let's put our (heads) down and go to work, I think there's things I can help you with,' that doesn't just speak to him as a coach...but it also speaks to him as a man."

By the end of last year, Agassi was runner-up to Pete Sampras at the US Open and finished the year at No.2 behind Hewitt.

Eng dash SL hopes

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rate mounting, Sri Lanka lost their last four wickets for six runs.

In the England innings, specialist one-day batsman Nick Knight was on fire again.

Knight, 33, slammed 88 from 112 balls in a knock embracing one six and two fours to take his average in seven hits in the competition to 73.3 from an aggregate of 440 runs.

Despite his knock, England failed to capitalise fully on a fine start to their innings, which had reached 151 for two wickets at the end of the 30th over.

The Sri Lankans were able to apply the brakes to the scoring rate, even without champion off-spin bowler Muttiah Muralitharan, sidelined with injury.

Veteran batsman Alec Stewart gave Knight fine support, hitting 51

from 59 balls.

Marcus Trescothick and Knight again gave England a sound start, punching a confident 56 in the opening 10 overs.

Trescothick was the dominant partner, hammering 39 from 42 balls, with six sweetly-timed boundaries.

He fell when paceman Chamila Gamage swung a ball through his defences to scatter the stumps.

Knight and Michael Vaughan added 58 from 66 deliveries before Vaughan (28 from 34 balls, with three fours) was trapped by fast bowler Dilhara Fernando.

Skipper Nasser Hussain joined Knight in a third-wicket stand of 41 from 63 balls.

Hussain (18 from 35 balls) was contained by the Sri Lankan bowlers, and appeared angry when

bowled by a skillfully flighted ball by Sri Lankan captain Sanath Jayasuriya.

Knight finally edged to wicketkeeper Kumar Sangakkara, while Ian Blackwell was lbw to the next delivery for a first-ball duck.

Vaas' bid for a hatrick was thwarted by big-hitting Paul Collingwood.

SCOREBOARD
Scoreboard of the England-Sri Lanka tri-nation series one-day clash at the Adelaide Oval on Friday:
ENGLAND
Trescothick b Gamage 39
Knight c Sangakkara b Vaas 88
Vaughan c Vaas b Fernando 28
Hussain b Jayasuriya 18
Stewart b Gamage 51
Blackwell lbw b Vaas 0
C'wood c T'ratne b Fernando 18
Irani not out 13
Caddick not out 1
Extras: (lb-11, w-4, nb-8) 23
Total: (For 7 wkts in 50 overs) 279
Fall of wickets: 1-56, 2-114, 3-155, 4-206, 5-206, 6-260, 7-272
Did not bat: James Anderson, Steve Harmison
Bowler O M R W
Vaas 10 0 54 2
Buddhika 4 0 27 0
Gamage 9 0 42 2
De Silva 8 0 45 0
Fernando 9 0 52 2
Jayasuriya 10 0 48 1

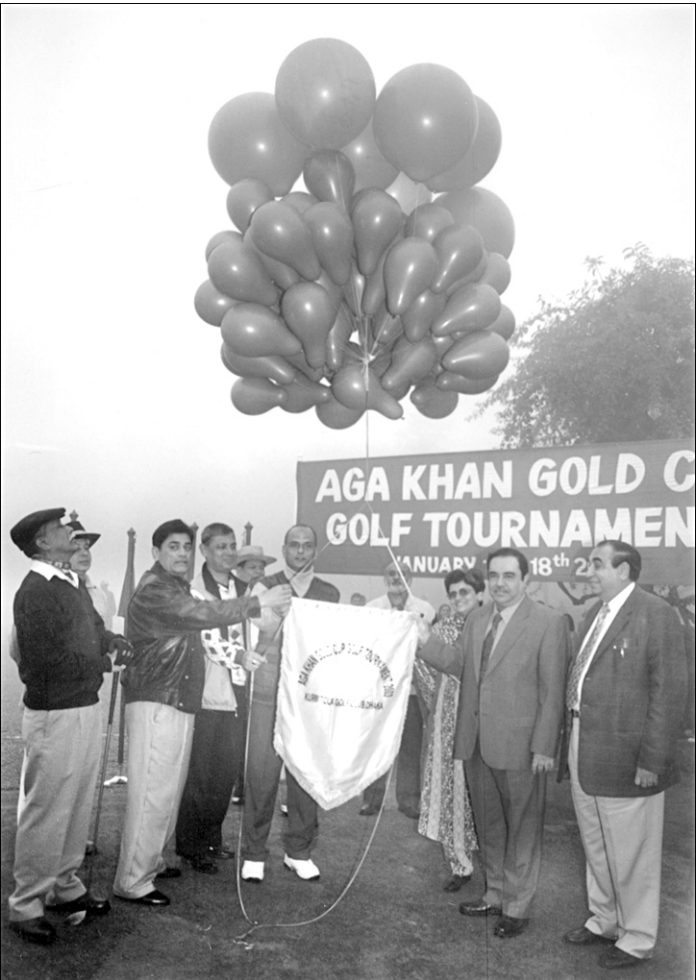


PHOTO: COURTESY

Chief of Army Staff and president of Kurmitola Golf Club Lt Gen Hasan Mashhud Chowdhury inaugurates the Aga Khan Gold Cup Golf Tournament at the KGC yesterday.

Result: England won by 19 runs.
Man-of-the-match: Andy Caddick.
Next match: Australia v England, Jan 19.