

Chetram next WICB boss

BBC ONLINE, undated

Guyana's Chetram Singh looks certain to succeed Wes Hall as president of the West Indies Cricket Board (WICB).

Former leg-spinner Willie Rodriguez, who played five Tests between 1962 and 1968, has decided to withdraw from this weekend's election in Dominica.

Explaining his decision, he said he believed Singh had greater support among WICB executives.

Singh, 53, is currently president of the Guyana Cricket Board.

Concerns have been expressed about his suitability for the top job in Caribbean cricket because of his bookmaking business, but he countered by pointing out that the business is legally registered.

Hall, who has held the WICB presidency for the past two years, is giving up the post for health reasons.

He said last month that he no longer wanted the "stressful situations and constant travel".

Assuming he is elected unopposed, Singh will take over at a crucial time for Caribbean cricket.

The West Indies team is finally emerging from a lengthy period in the doldrums with the selectors having decided to put their faith in the region's young players.

The WICB will be looking to ensure that progress is maintained, while continuing preparations to host the next World Cup in 2007.

There is concern that grounds are not up to the standard, but CWC 2007 managing director Chris Dehring earned praise from the International Cricket Council last weekend when he outlined the initial plans for the tournament.

Boje breaks leg, undergoes op

AFP, London

South Africa's Nicky Boje was having surgery on Wednesday for a broken leg after he fell awkwardly in their one-day defeat to England, the BBC reported.

The 30-year-old completely tore his left fibula and ruptured ligaments in his ankle during Tuesday's match at Edgbaston.

Boje was having surgery at a Nottingham hospital and was due to return to South Africa as soon as he had recovered.

He was therefore not included in the squad for South Africa's five-Test series against England which starts later this month at Edgbaston.

Boje, on as a substitute for Martin van Jaarsveld, turned his ankle while fielding in a match South Africa eventually lost by four wickets.

He immediately signalled for assistance and was carried from the field before being taken to hospital.

South Africa play England in the triangular series final at Lord's on Saturday.

Uzbek boosts

FROM PAGE 13 and the Federation Cup.

The slow but skilled Turabikov scored the all-important goal in the Federation Cup final against Muktiyoddha last season. Turabikov will join his teammates in Chittagong today to prepare for their opening game.

Mohammedan will start their title defense at the MA Aziz Stadium against Jagorani club of Jamalpur on Friday.

Meanwhile, the club's secretary Lokman Hossain said that Nigerian defender Salisu Osalio has confirmed his availability for a second successive season.

"He is expected to arrive in Dhaka tomorrow. But he is unlikely to play the first match. Besides, another Uzbek player is also expected to join the team next week," said Lokman.



RANI HAMID OF TOMORROW: Saima Hamid, grand daughter of International Women's Master Rani Hamid, during her third round engagement in the Standard Chartered Bank schools chess competition against Liza yesterday.

Maturing fast

Cricket

REUTERS, London

When Andrew Flintoff first appeared on the international scene, the English, so prone to premature excesses of optimism, quickly drew comparisons with Ian Botham.

It proved, predictably, an all-round kiss of death.

Flintoff, barely out of his teens, flopped and soon the country's more popular newspapers were writing off the Lancastrian as a lager-swilling, burger-devouring no-hoper.

They reported in full detail when the all-rounder's weight neared the 18-stone mark to overtake world heavyweight champion Lennox Lewis and prompt England coach Duncan Fletcher to issue dire warnings over Flintoff's future. That was then.

On Tuesday, the 25-year-old Flintoff produced a display that Botham himself, he of 383 Test wickets and 5,200 runs as well as 145 one-day international wickets and 2,113 runs, would have been proud of.

While his bowling was not at its best against South Africa in a one-day triangular series encounter at Edgbaston, Flintoff still managed a wicket with his fifth ball, the not insignificant one of Graeme Smith

after an ominously fluent 45 runs from 39 balls.

Flintoff then claimed three catches at the centre of a fine fielding display before carting the South African bowling to all corners as he hit 54 off 40 deliveries, including the one six of the match.

Typically, he got out to Makhaya Ntini going for another hook for six, that after grinning his way through a bombardment from South Africa's short-fused quick bowler Andre Nel.

It was a real Bothamesque feat early in England's four-wicket win, however, which really caught the eye.



ANDREW FLINTOFF

Standing at third slip and acting as a one-man close-catching cor-

don, the giant Lancastrian, 6ft 4ins in his socks, leapt right and threw out a hand instinctively to catch Jacques Kallis off Richard Johnson.

Kallis, with an average of 314 and two centuries from his previous three innings, this time departed for 15. Flintoff the showman puffed out his chest and held his arms aloft for the Edgbaston crowd.

Flintoff's career statistics, in contrast, deserve little chest puffing and remain well short of what is required from a genuine all-rounder.

But the improvement in both batting and seam bowling has been marked in recent seasons. There has even been a Test century, 137 against New Zealand in Christchurch, surely the mark of growing maturity.

Botham, part of the Sky Television commentary team at Edgbaston on Tuesday, thinks so.

"I think he's just coming of age," he said. "He's been pushed up the order to number five and responded to that. He's our key one-day bowler and has a strong arm and magnificent hands."

"He's had this dreadful tag attached to him, as England's next great all-rounder, but in the end, he's Andrew Flintoff."

"That's the person I want to watch. I hope this is the start of 10 great years."

BCCI thinks of Corporate Cup

BBC ONLINE, undated

Indian cricket chiefs are considering plans to introduce a new all-star competition from next year.

The proposals envisage up to six teams taking part in a series of day-night games, with four overseas players permitted per team.

It could mean the likes of Brian Lara, Steve Waugh, Brett Lee, Shane Warne and Muttiah Muralitharan being invited to take part, depending on their international cricket commitments.

Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) president Jagmohan Dalmiya has told the Times of India that the competition will be called the Corporate Cup.

"They [the teams] will be allowed to sign up any player for the event. So you might see players from different cities and states fighting for the cause of one team," he was quoted as saying.

Board officials will meet next month for further discussion about the plans, which they hope could revitalise the domestic game in India.

Although the national side attracts fervent support, matches in existing competitions are often poorly attended.

A similar problem exists all over the cricket world and the England and Wales Cricket Board recently responded to declining attendances at county fixtures by successfully launching the Twenty20 Cup.

Hookes blasts

FROM PAGE 13 on the field.

"If the Australian team is being true to the Test cap, their aim will be to go out there and annihilate Bangladesh."

Australian wicketkeeper-batsman Adam Gilchrist has already revealed his side will show Bangladesh no mercy, setting the scene for what could be two of the shortest Test matches of all time as long as Waugh doesn't elect to bat too long.

"Nobody wants to see Australia go out there and score a thousand runs," said Hookes.

Never before in 126 years of Test cricket has there been a result on the first day, but there have been 17 instances of two-day drubbings.

The first was Australia's seven-run win over England at The Oval in 1882 when Fred 'The Demon' Spofforth took 14 wickets, leading to the mock obituary for English cricket that appeared in a London newspaper and led to the creation of the Ashes.

The most recent was Australia's victory by an innings and 198 runs against Pakistan at Sharjah last October, when Shane Warne took eight wickets and Matthew Hayden scored 119.

The lowest Test innings total is New Zealand's 26, made against England in Auckland 1954-55. The highest is Sri Lanka's 952 for six declared against India at Colombo in 1997 when Sanath Jayasuriya scored 340 and Anil Kumble went for 1-223.

Some even claim that West Indian Brian Lara's world record of 375 made against England at St John's, Antigua in 1994 will be under threat if Australia refuses to declare, as will Viv Richards' record for the fastest Test century: 56 balls.

Bangladesh have lost 18 of their 19 Tests since their Test cricket debut in 2000, salvaging a draw against Zimbabwe two years ago when rain intervened.

83 makes Vaughan happy

Cricket

AFP, Birmingham

England captain Michael Vaughan downplayed his match-winning 83 against South Africa at Edgbaston in the NatWest triangular series day-night one-day international here Tuesday.

"I played and missed at balls which over the past few weeks I've nicked," said Vaughan after his career-best one-day international innings guided England to a four-wicket win and ended a run of low scores for the Yorkshire batsman.

"You've just got to keep on an even level. Cricket is a funny game. But an 83 is bound to do me a load of good," Vaughan added.

England gave themselves a boost by winning what was a dress rehearsal for Saturday's Lord's final with 11 overs to spare.

They were on top early in the match, restricting South Africa to 198 for nine after Proteas captain Graeme Smith won the toss.

England fast bowler James Anderson took four for 38 even though Smith took 19 off his first over.

"The character Jimmy Anderson shows time and time again amazes me," said Vaughan of

the 20-year-old Lancashire quick."

Anderson's county colleague Andrew Flintoff made 54, sharing a stand of 100 with Vaughan for the fourth wicket.

"Freddie came in and played well. But when you're chasing 198 you should get them. But he's taking it on and it's good to have



MICHAEL VAUGHAN

him in your team," Vaughan insisted.

All-rounder Rikki Clarke, who plays for county champions Surrey, posted his one-day international best score of 37, putting on 64 with Vaughan to take England to the brink of victory.

"Rikki played really, really well. In front of 20,000 people, under lights and against a good South African attack he was very cool. He's got that Surrey kind of strut about him," Vaughan said.

But he warned England supporters to expect a South African backlash. "If we play 90 per cent as well on Saturday we'll have a good chance but South Africa will fight back. They are a very experienced side."

Meanwhile a disappointed Smith said: "Today we lost the plot again," a reference to his team's second series defeat by England, separated by the Proteas' seven-wicket victory over the hosts at Old Trafford on Thursday.

"But we can still get it back. We bowled too many bad balls up front. Maybe it was because we felt we needed to take a wicket every ball."

"The only good thing is that we've got the best part of a week to put it right," Smith added.

Before the final, South Africa face Zimbabwe at Hampshire's Rose Bowl ground on Thursday and Smith said: "This is a young side, we need outings in the middle and a win over Zimbabwe can only boost our confidence."

"If we play to our potential we can win the final."

Cricket

NEWS24, Cape Town

Herschelle Gibbs had a laugh with Hansie Cronje after the disgraced former South African captain gave evidence at the King Commission.

The South African opening batsman told the London Sunday Times that he treated the six-month ban he received for his part in the match-fixing scandal as a holiday. He also claims that after Cronje had given evidence, the pair got together and had a laugh.

Asked by the newspaper whether he holds it against Cronje for effectively corrupting him into match-fixing, he replies: "No. I never for one minute held it against him. I spoke to him quite a lot and was in the courtroom when he gave his evidence. I saw him as soon as he'd finished and had a good laugh with him."



HERSCHELLE GIBBS

Gibbs told the King Commission that although he agreed to Cronje's proposal to throw away his wicket during a one-day match in India, he forgot about the deal when he went out to bat.

He now describes this downtime as "six months of holiday",



PHOTO: COURTESY

Deputy Commissioner of Narail M Farhaduddin (3rd from L) inaugurates the regional round of the 16th national handball championship at the Narail Zila Stadium yesterday.

Federer struggles

Tennis

AFP, Gstaad

Roger Federer to come down to earth after his weekend win at Wimbledon with a scratchy victory in his opening match at the Swiss Open here on Tuesday.

A scrappy performance from Spanish qualifier Marc Lopez quickly showed the new Swiss success story that he was human after all.

But Federer survived to collect a 6-3, 6-7 (4/7), 6-3 result into the second round at this alpine valley village.

With the top seed leading 6-3, 5-4, Lopez rose to the occasion, saving a pair of match points to prevent the Helvetic hero from serving out a quick victory.

A double-fault from Federer combined with a cross-court wide opened the door for the outsider.

The contest went to a third set, lasting nearly another hour before Federer finally struggled home.

"I just served so badly, I have not confidence on this fast clay," said the 21-year-old who leads the ATP in match victories, and holds five titles on four surfaces this season.

"But it was so important to come here and play. I had to come for the fans, for the tournament and for Switzerland. But this match

was a near-miss."

Other seeds got through with a minimum of stress.

Number 2 German Rainer Schuettler, who played the Australian Open final against Andre Agassi six months ago, defeated Australian Wayne Arthurs 6-2, 6-3, while three-time champion Alex Corretja made a winning start.

The 29-year-old Spaniard is playing for the first time since the birth of his daughter nearly three weeks ago.

He said he reluctantly came from Barcelona, but made the trip partially worthwhile with a rebounding win over John van Lottum of the Netherlands 6-0, 6-2.

Seventh seed Corretja changed coaches at the end of a disappointing French Open, parting company with Javier Duarte after a total of 16 years together. He now works with Ecuadorian Enrique "Beppe" Perez and said the change was good for everyone.

"I'm starting over, I'm motivated again," said the Spaniard. "We had both gone a bit stale and agreed we needed a change."

Corretja is trying to correct a go-slow season and has only produced one quarter-final as his year's best showing.

Czech eighth seed Radek Stepanek eased through over American Hugo Armando 6-3, 6-3 and Swiss Davis Cup player Michel Kratochvil defeated German Tomas Behrend 6-4, 6-7 (6/8), 6-2.



ROGER FEDERER

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Yon bloke
4 No longer
9 Use a
12 CARE
13 Extraterrestrial
14 Judge
15 Use
17 "Mayday!"
18 Scratch
19 Cavalry
21 Butterfly
24 Sarajevo
25 Numerical
26 Put
28 Roeper's
31 Mini-
33 Demon
35 Slight-
36 Distend
38 —
40 Bambl's

41 Informal
43 Join
45 Id instinct
47 Monterey
48 Actress
49 Vanish
54 In support
55 Author
56 Ram's
57 Wapiti
58 Enlisted
59 Supermam
60 "Kill—
61 Possessed
62 Square
63 root of ix
64 flowers
65 Long-
66 Popular
67 photo
68 magazine
69 Pedestal
70 occupant
71 Sermom
72 subject
73 Serpentine
74 swimmer
75 Reverential
76 fear
77 Tyrant-
78 nosaurus

DOWN

21 Spheroidal
22 Square
23 root of ix
24 flowers
25 Long-
26 Popular
27 photo
28 magazine
29 Pedestal
30 occupant
31 Sermom
32 subject
33 Serpentine
34 swimmer
35 Reverential
36 fear
37 Tyrant-
38 nosaurus

Solution time: 21 mins.

SKA WHAT DRAB
HIF ROMAN RICO
AWER ERIN ECHO
HIDE AND GO SEEK
MY RHIN JET LAIS HOB
SPACE WAD AURA
PAGA OER ANGER
JERK LILAND HYDE
ALARA COWARD
CALIC CANE WAD
KNEE KNEW NYE

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11

12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59

CRYPTOQUIP

O V Y K E Z F V Y P E E V X
W Z I P W P V Y X F A W J U I
R Z E X W T I V R W O V A W Z P
V G G U O U Z K R V Z X K W T O V Y I ?
Saturday's Cryptquip: I JUST DISCOVERED
HOW MUCH I LOVE JIGSAW PUZZLES. NOW I'M
REALLY GOING TO PIECES.
Today's Cryptquip Clue: O equals C

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.