

Same WI for 4th ODI

England play the waiting game

Cricket

CRICINFO/BBC ONLINE, undated

England captain Michael Vaughan is approaching the remainder of the one-day series in the Caribbean with mixed feelings.

Last week, he was bemoaning the intensity of the schedule, in which England were due to play six matches in 12 days. But now, after this weekend's double-washout in Trinidad, he and his team are itching for action.

Vaughan's men arrived in Grenada on Monday to play the fourth one-day international on Wednesday.

West Indies meanwhile named an unchanged 14-man squad for the match.

Regular captain Brian Lara will lead the West Indies as they target revenge for the two-wicket defeat in the opening match in Guyana.

England won a thrilling series-opener in Guyana last Sunday, but

were restricted to just 16 overs this weekend as torrential rain flooded the outfield at the Queen's Park Oval in Port-of-Spain.

England have not had much luck with one-day internationals of late. On their pre-Christmas tour to Sri Lanka, they were routed by ten wickets in their opening fixture, before the monsoon swept in to wipe out the second and third matches in Colombo.

It is a blow to England's hopes of finding a settled side ahead of September's Champions' Trophy tournament (which, incidentally, is also likely to be rain-affected, given that it has been scheduled for the tail-end of the English summer).

Instead, England have been left twiddling their thumbs in the dressing-room, and the opportunity for valuable experience is ebbing away. Of the 15 players, six have yet to play 20 one-day internationals -- it is a tally that pales in comparison with most international sides.

And there is the prospect of further interruptions for the remain-

der of the series. When the teams reconvene in Grenada on Wednesday, more showers are forecast, before moving on to St. Lucia for back-to-back games at the weekend, followed by the finale in Barbados on May 5.

First half ended 2-0. Rakibul scored two goals while Faruk, Samir and Masud netted one each.

In the other match of the day, Khulna Shahpur Madhugram College routed Narail Abdul Hai College 6-0.

The winners dominated the first half 2-0. Both Lablu and Ripon scored hat-tricks.

Magura soccer

OUR CORRESPONDENT

Satkhiria Khan Bahadur Ahsanullah College Ekadosh and Khulna Shahpur Madhugram College won their respective matches in the final round of the inter-college football tournament at the Magura Stadium yesterday.

In the first match, Khan Bahadur Ahsanullah College outplayed Jhenidah Zinnah Alam College 5-0. First half ended 2-0.

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Imran slams

FROM PAGE 13
rounder Abdul Razzaq and wicketkeeper Moin Khan will appear before a four-member medical commission headed by orthopaedic surgeon Abdul Wajid in Lahore on Wednesday.

"The PCB is sidetracking from the main reasons why Pakistan lost the series. Some fast bowler picking injury is not unusual.

"Why Pakistan's bowlers had problems no one bothered to know and no one addressed the need to have a specialised bowling coach," said Imran, rated as one of the world's top four all-rounders in the 1980s.

Doubts were raised over Akhtar's injury during the decisive Test in Rawalpindi after he hurt his wrist and back in a fall on his follow through on the second day.

The 28-year-old Akhtar, who managed a disappointing seven wickets in Pakistan's 2-1 series loss, did not take to the field on day three and his coming out to bat on the fourth day raised suspicions over his injury.

"To blame one player for a spineless performance is unjustified. Akhtar might be responsible for indiscipline but that should be dealt with then and there," said Imran, who took 362 wickets in 82 Tests.

"He (Akhtar) won three series in a row but instead of asking questions and learning lessons from defeats, the PCB has sidetracked," said Imran, now a member of Pakistan's parliament.

Imran said the main question that needed to be asked concerned the poor batting show against India.

"Pakistan's batting was bowled out in two Tests by inexperienced Indian bowling because our batsmen lack technique due to a poor domestic structure.

"Apart from captain Inzamamul Haq we have no compact batsman and Mohammad Kaif who finds no place in Indian Test team can walk into the Pakistan side for his technique and temperament," said Imran.

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Time to show off

Football

AFP, Paris

Six weeks before the first ball of Euro 2004 is kicked in anger players still hoping to make it to the party in Portugal will be out to impress in Wednesday's latest batch of warm-ups.

Only two of the teams qualified for the June 12-July 4 competition - England and defending champions France - are sitting out the feast of friendlies which offers Portugal a chance to get their preparations back on track after slipping up against Italy last month.

The hosts are up against Sweden in Coimbra, one of the ten Euro venues.

Three time holders Germany, thrashed by the French in November, travel to Bucharest to take on Romania with their confidence restored after seeing off Belgium on their last run out.

Chelsea striker Adrian Mutu is expected to be missing for Romania after picking up a ligament strain, while Germany coach Rudi Voller is deprived of two Christians - Worns and Rahn, both players picking up injuries for their respective clubs Borussia Dortmund and SV Hamburg at the weekend.

While the likes of Dietmar Hamann, Michael Ballack and Oliver Kahn are set in stone for the journey to Portugal Voller admits there are still places up for grabs.

"In certain positions there is nothing decided so I am keeping the door ajar," he explained.

Germany, last successful in 1996, are grouped with Holland who welcome back star striker Patrick Kluivert after a six month hiatus due to a knee injury for their friendly against Greece.

Kluivert's Barcelona teammate Giovanni van Bronckhorst is also back in the fold along with Frank de Boer, Jaap Stam and Clarence Seedorf - all four missed last month's goalless draw against France.

This is coach Dick Advocaat's last chance of running the rule over prospective candidates for Portugal before he names his Euro 2004 squad in mid-May.

Italy host fellow finalists Spain in Genoa without AS Roma striker Francesco Totti and AC Milan defender Alessandro Nesta - both players picking up knocks at the weekend.

Inter Milan goalkeeper Francesco Toldo is also out of sorts with coach Giovanni Trapattoni offering his place to veteran Lazio

stopper Angelo Peruzzi whose last appearance for Italy was back in 1999.

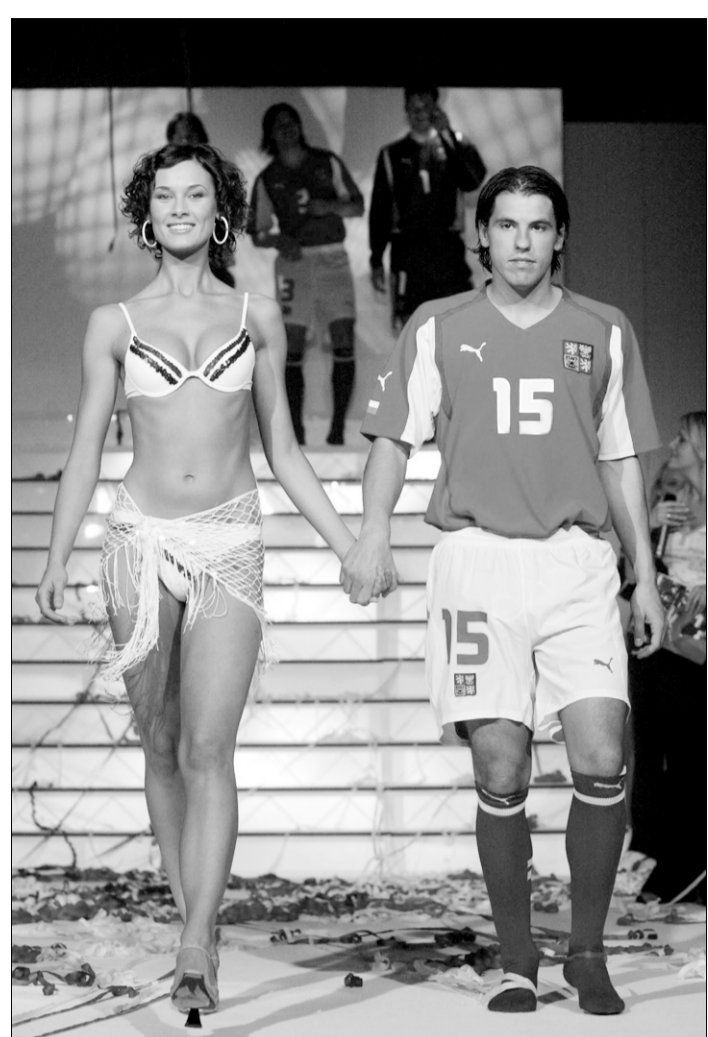
But the 35-year-old is taking a realistic approach to his call-up, all too aware that it is unlikely to lead to him stepping on a plane to Portugal.

"I'm not kidding myself. It is very satisfying to be back, but this call-up is because of an emergency."

On the Spanish side Kluivert's captain at Barca, Carlos Puyol, is unavailable with his place going to Real Betis' Juanito.

In Prague the Czech Republic, who as Czechoslovakia beat a German side that included Scotland manager Berti Vogts on penalties to capture the 1976 title, host Zico's Japan.

Czech coach Karel Bruckner has recalled Tomas Rosicky after the Borussia Dortmund midfielder's



WHERE'S HER DRESS? Czech Republic striker Milan Baros and a model present the last collection of jerseys and T-shirts for Euro 2004 made by Puma, the German maker of sportswear at Prague's Hradcany Castle on April 26.

spell on the sidelines with a double fracture of his left forearm.

Everton's Thomas Gravesen ruled himself out of Denmark's encounter with Scotland in Copenhagen after succumbing to a knee injury in weekend Premiership action.

The midfield player is due to miss Everton's three remaining league fixtures but is expected to be fit for Euro itself.

In other Euro action Russia, who booked their place in Portugal by knocking Wales out of the running in the play-offs, travel to Oslo to play Norway, Switzerland host Slovenia, Bulgaria take on Cameroon and Croatia face Macedonia in Skopje.

"There's nothing untoward about the delay. Rivaldo just wanted time to think about it," said Harrison.

"I know for sure that Sam made a good impression on him and so did Phil Gartside. Everything's looking good."

Thorpe can swim 400m

OLYMPICS

AFP, Sydney

Australian swimming superstar Ian Thorpe on Tuesday gratefully accepted a second chance to defend his Olympic 400m title at the Athens Games in August.

A month after he was sensationally disqualified for a false start in his heat of the event at the national selection trials, 21-year-old Thorpe said he would take his place in the 400m relinquished by teammate Craig Stevens.

"I'm pleased that I have the opportunity to swim this event at the Olympics and I'm grateful to Craig to have given me this opportunity," world champion and world record holder Thorpe told a press conference.

Stevens announced on television on Monday that he would withdraw in the hope that he could watch Thorpe swim the 400m final in Athens.

Stevens, 23, said he wanted to now concentrate on his 1500m freestyle and 4x200m freestyle relay events at the Olympics.

Thorpe agreed "in some ways" he would be swimming in his favourite event by default but was satisfied Stevens had made his decision in what he considered his own best interests and not due to outside pressure.

and second chance he had been offered made him appreciate the opportunity even more.

Thorpe dismissed a suggestion put to him that Stevens had effectively "sold" the 400m position.

"To put money out there as someone's main objective in this is quite disheartening when you actually know the person that you're talking about," Thorpe said.

"Craig's one of my friends and for people to say that is disappointing for me and I think you have to look at the whole situation and not just part of it."

Thorpe also qualified for the 100m and 200m as well as the three relays but the 400m is his best event.

Unbeaten in the 400m over the last seven years, Thorpe will join Hackett as the two Australians in the event at Athens.

However, he had a word of warning for those who thought he had the gold medal in the bag while Hackett was in the field.

His coach Tracey Menzies said she would not change Thorpe's new starting technique, used in the trials, which sees him balance with both feet on the front of the blocks rather than having one foot back.

Thorpe dismissed any chance of a repeat false start at the Olympics in August.

Thorpe said the disqualification



IAN THORPE

who had qualified for Athens by finishing second to Grant Hackett at the trials before also earning a berth in his pet 1500m event.

Thorpe had said he would not take the spot if he felt close friend Stevens had been unduly pressured to give it up.

Thorpe said the disqualification

ADCCB to persuade BCCI

Cricket

AFP, Abu Dhabi

Jagmohan Dalmiya revealed Monday he was unaware that Indian and Pakistani teams would be playing in the oil-rich emirate, the Press Trust of India carried a Nair statement saying the game had not been approved and BCCI cricketers would not be released to play.

However Shetty said: "I have spoken to Dalmiya and apart from inviting him, we have urged him to send us a message on the inaugural match.

"For us it is a matter of great pride that almost all the top players from both India and Pakistan have accepted our invitation to come and kick start international action at the Sheikh Zayed Cricket Stadium."

Cancellation would prove embarrassing at the highest level in the UAE capital where Sheikh Nahyan bin Mubarak al-Nahyan, ADCCB chair-

man, had himself announced the game.

Sheikh Nahyan is minister for higher education and a favoured son of revered UAE President Sheikh Zayed.

"We thank the Indian and Pakistan cricket boards and the players who have all agreed to support cricket in Abu Dhabi," the minister was quoted as saying. "We are happy that India and Pakistan, the two countries with whom the UAE shares exemplary relations, should kick-start international competitions here."

Sources in the Indian cricket board told AFP that Abu Dhabi officials had privately requested the players from both sides to take part in the match. Emirati newspapers reported an enthusiastic response.

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CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Boat attachment
5 Conditions
8 Attention getter
12 Use a squeegie
13 Pair
14 Blue hue
15 In due time
16 Flightless bird
17 Senseless?
18 Biological categories
20 Greek cheese
22 Unlikely promgoer
26 Burdened
29 Sort
30 Crucial
31 Okla-homa city
32 Sugar (Suff.)
33 "American Gigo" star
34 Literary collection
35 Wood-shaping tool
36 Accom-lades

DOWN

1 Booty
21 Wapiti
22 "The Music Man" setting
23 Secluded valley
24 Dweeb
25 Mid-May honoree
26 McKin-ley's first lady
28 Buy now, pay later

Solution time: 25 mins.

1. Boat attachment
2. Air-freshener
3. Word architect
4. Got more zines
5. Revealing fashion
6. "Mayday!"
7. Puffy dessert
8. British Yule show, for short
9. Com-plained
10. Bottom line
11. Bill
12. Skedad-died
13. Wapiti
14. "The Music Man" setting
15. Secluded valley
16. Dweeb
17. Mid-May honoree
18. McKin-ley's first lady
19. Buy now, pay later

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S'kara shines

FROM PAGE 13

Ebrahim not out	50
Taibu c S'kara b Chandana	12
Maregwede c Dilshan b Arnold	18
Chigeyura c S'kara	5
Utseya run out (S'kara)	3
Mupariwa run out (Chandana)	8
Hondo c J'dene b Maharoof	2
Panyangara b Maharoof	0
Extras: (lb-1, nb-5, w-1)	7
Total: (All out in 43.4 overs)	151
Fall of wickets: 1-19, 2-22, 3-65, 4-90, 5-115, 6-123, 7-135, 8-146, 9-151	

Bowler	O	M	R	W
K'kara	7	1	30	1
Fernando	7	1	20	1
Maharoof	8.4	1	19	2
Herath	10	0	37	0
Chandana	7	0	23	2
Arnold	4	0	21	2

Result: Sri Lanka won by 72 runs and lead five-match series 4-0.

Man-of-the-match: Upul Abanihan.

Abanihan gr-champs

FROM PAGE 13

Team	P	W	Pts
Abanihan KC	3	3	9
City Corp. Snr	3	2	6
Friends Club	3	1	3
Shatabdi Gosthi	3	0	0

CRYPTOQUIP

N Q E V B C L E P U T U B
T U E K U G N M N P C E Q K X T Y
P X L G N Q X , L B S G V Y X

USKP BMXX E PXL GXEY?
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: BECAUSE I GAVE YOGI'S SHOW SUCH A VERY BAD REVIEW, I SUPPOSE I PANNED A BEAR.
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: X equals E

The Cryptoquip 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.

Never say die!

Football

REUTERS, Rome

Roberto Baggio's long goodbye to professional soccer began last December, when he told a regional television station that he planned to hang up his boots at the end of the Serie A season.

His reappearance for the Italian national team, more than five years after he last pulled on the famous blue shirt, in a friendly against Spain in Genoa on Wednesday could lead to his farewell being stretched well beyond May 16, however.

Baggio's unlikely call-up at the age of 37 was a gift from national coach Giovanni Trapattoni after the striker reached the milestone of 200 Serie A goals during Brescia's 2-2 draw with Parma on March 14. That made Baggio the fifth-highest Serie A scorer of all time, behind Silvio Piola, Gunnar Nordahl, Giuseppe Meazza and Jose Altafini.

Since then "The Divine Ponytail" has shown no sign of slowing down, scoring another four goals to take his season's tally to 11.

Trapattoni, who closed the door firmly on Baggio before the 2002 World Cup, knows his charitable gesture could backfire and prompt calls for Baggio to be included in Italy's squad for Euro 2004.

Of Italy's established international strikers, only Francesco Totti on 20 goals and Christian Vieri on 13 top Baggio's total.

With AC Milan striker Filippo Inzaghi struggling to shake off an ankle injury and Juventus's

Italy against Nigeria in the second round or the way in which he imperiously led them to a semi-final victory over the Bulgarians.

After losing that final in Pasadena his appearances for the Azzurri became fewer and further between.

Sacchi stayed on until December 1996, but called up Baggio only twice more, in low-key European Championship qualifiers against Croatia and Slovenia.

Having made his Serie A debut in 1986 aged 19 for Fiorentina, Baggio went on to play for Juventus, AC Milan, Bologna, Inter Milan and finally Brescia.

His finest years as a player were crowned by FIFA's World Player of the Year award in 1993 and Serie A titles with Juve in 1995 and Milan in 1996 but they were also blighted by frosty relationships with the men who coached him.

In his 2001 autobiography, A Door in the Sky, Baggio described Marcello Lippi, who coached him at Juventus and Inter, as "my iron sergeant...he conducted a war against me without a minute's respite, without plausible motives, without sense or logic".

He also detailed his estrangement from Fabio Capello at Milan and his falling-out with ex-Italy coach Arrigo Sacchi, who coached Italy to the 1994 World Cup final.

When Baggio skied his penalty over the bar to hand Brazil victory in the shoot-out at the end of that match, he sealed an enduring image as a glorious failure.

The image of Baggio with his head in his hands outweighed the precious goals he scored to save

Today, Baggio's popularity among Italian soccer fans is greater than ever.

Small, slight, perfectly balanced and with superb vision, he remains arguably the best example of the "fantasista", a player who uses craft and imagination instead of brute strength, in Italy's top division.

His 200th Serie A goal proved his skills remain razor-sharp: with a feint, a sudden turn and acceleration, Baggio led a Parma defender on his backside before firing a perfectly angled shot into the bottom corner of the net.

Of his latest international call-up Baggio has said little. He has not pressed his candidature for Euro 2004. He has no need to when there are millions of Italians ready to do it for him.

Before the 2002 World Cup in Japan fans and the sports press ran a highly-publicised campaign to persuade Trapattoni to take him to Japan.

When Trapattoni declined there were protests outside the Rome headquarters of the Italian Football Federation.

Already there are signs that the Baggio bandwagon is gathering momentum. Last week Corriere dello Sport invited its readers to send in text messages calling for Baggio to go to Portugal.

Trapattoni might yet regret his decision to recall Italian soccer's old master.

A trio of low-key performances for Maldini's successor, Dino Zoff, appeared to bring the curtain down on Baggio's international career, ending in a European Championship qualifier against Belarus in March 1999, when he came on for the last half hour in place of Enrico Chiesa.

According to the newspaper it took almost a year of negotiations with Beckham's agents and his club before the project was agreed.

It was decided that the footballer would be most tired after a training session, so one late afternoon Taylor-Wood booked the pair of them into a Madrid hotel, and after he dropped off to sleep set the camera running.

In recent weeks Beckham, who is married to former Spice Girls pop star Victoria Adams, has faced accusations in British newspapers that he had affairs with at least two women, allegations he has dismissed.

"If you watch the whole video he seems very vulnerable and it becomes very mesmerising," she told the Daily Telegraph.

He sleeps and that's art!