

Agassi bids Paris bye

AFP, Paris

Former champion Andre Agassi suffered one of the most crushing defeats of his legendary career here on Monday when he crashed out of the French Open at the hands of French qualifier Jerome Haehnel who was playing his first ever match on the tour.

Sixth seed Agassi, the oldest man in the draw at 34, lost his first round encounter 6-4, 7-6, 6-3 in just over two hours on the Philippe Chatrier Court against a man ranked 271 in the world.

There were no such problems, however, for defending women's champion Justine Henin-Hardenne who eased into the second round with a 6-4, 6-4 win over France's Sandrine Testud.

Agassi, the champion here in 1999, was looking to win his 800th career match but his campaign was sabotaged both by an opponent more used to playing satellite tours, as well as his poor preparation which had seen him play just once in the last two months.

That outing too had ended in defeat in St Pollen last week at the hands of unknown Serbian Nenad Zimonjic, ranked 339.

Agassi, one of only five men to have won all four Grand Slams, was playing in his 16th Roland Garros tournament having made his debut back in 1987 but he admitted that he was completely outplayed by the 23-year-old Frenchman.

Eng set

FROM PAGE 13 Astle 64; Harmison 4-126, Jones 3-82) ENGLAND: First innings 441 (Strauss 112, Trescothick 86, Flintoff 63; Martin 3-94) NEW ZEALAND: Second innings 336 (Richardson 101, McCullum 96; Harmison 4-76, Giles 3-87) ENGLAND: Second innings (over-night 8-0)

Trescothick c and b Tuffey 2 Strauss run out 83 Butcher c Fleming b Martin 6 Hussain not out 38 Thorpe not out 12 Extras: (b-7, lb-9, nb-12) 28 Total: (For 3 wickets in 61 overs) 169

Fall of wickets: 1-18, 2-35, 3-143. To bat: A Flintoff, G Jones (wkt), A Giles, S Jones, M Hoggard, S Harmison

Table with columns: Bowler, O, M, R, W. Rows: Oram, Tuffey, Vettori, Martin, Styris, Cairns.

We need big

FROM PAGE 13 cricket. To do that we have to introduce a system of substitute players", said Mahmud adding that Bangladesh need a very strong A team.

The thinking cricketer also highlighted the problem our players faced in the two rain-reduced 25-over matches.

"In such situations you need some good clean hitters that our opponents had in abundance. But we have only a couple like Alok Kapali who is desperately out of touch now. The other player is Rafique who can hit the ball quite a distance", said the 33-year-old Mahmud, who admitted he himself had lost his big hitting prowess.

"Now I'm just a bowler who can bat a bit. May be batting at number nine does not give someone a chance to show his batting skills but I feel that I have also let the team down with my batting," Mahmud said. He took three wickets and scored only five runs in the ODI series.



State Minister for Youth and Sports Fazlur Rahman addressing the condolence meeting of late Zafar Imam, eminent sports organiser and secretary general of Bangladesh Olympic Association, yesterday at the NSC auditorium. Zafar died on May 20.

Primera Liga Final nail in Real coffin

Football

AFP, Madrid

Real Madrid's humiliation was completed when they slumped to a record fifth consecutive league defeat with an astonishing 4-1 demolition by Real Sociedad in front of their shellshocked home fans, who whistled their supposed heroes from the pitch.

The defeat, on the last day of the season, left Real's collection of multi-millionaire superstars in fourth place in the table and condemned them to the qualifying rounds of the Champions League next season.

"The fans had every reason to whistle us," admitted Ronaldo, who ended the season as the Spanish first division's top scorer with 24 goals despite not scoring in the last eight games.

"We were a big disappointment. We can't go downhill like this (next season) if we want to win title."

Real's bitter rivals Barcelona finished second despite a 2-1 defeat at Real Zaragoza while Deportivo La Coruna moved up to third thanks to a 1-0 win at Racing Santander, with Uruguayan international Walter Pandiani scoring the only goal of the game.

Madrid, 29-times Spanish champions, were behind to Sociedad after just nine minutes when Darko Kovacevic headed home a Xabi Prieto pass.

Prieto then found the net himself after 28 minutes for the 21 year-old's first league goal, firing home from the edge of the area.

Javier De Paula put the Basque visitors three in front four minutes later, exposing Real's vulnerability to aerial attacks with another header.

Madrid's Luis Figo reduced the deficit from the penalty spot six minutes before the break, after Sociedad's French defender Lionel

Potillon was judged harshly to have brought down Ronaldo.

However, Prieto's day was completed when he was handed the penalty duties after Agustín Aranzabal had been brought down on the hour.

"It has been tough to play in the Bernabeu all season. But it is not fair to be calling the players 'mercenaries'. Some players were affected and the atmosphere tonight wasn't much help," responded Real coach Carlos Queiroz to the hostile reaction.

However, the Real fans will almost certainly be getting what they were demanding at the end of the game, with Queiroz likely to be relieved of his duties in the next few days.

FINAL TABLE

Spanish league table after Sunday's matches on the final day of the season (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, goals against, points):

Table with columns: Team, P, W, D, L, GF, GA, Pts. Rows: Valencia, Barcelona, Deportivo, Real Madrid, Bilbao, Sevilla, Athletic, Villarreal, Real Betis, Malaga, Mallorca, Zaragoza, Osasuna, Albacete, Sociedad, Espanyol, Santander, Valladolid, Celta Vigo, Murcia, Racing Santander.

Eves' soccer camp begins

SPORTS REPORTER

The first phase of the women's football training programme under Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) was launched at the Ansar Academy in Shaipur yesterday.

Coach Shamsuddoah Chand will be in charge of the month-long camp. Thirty footballers from three hill districts will participate in the camp, which was declared open by sports organiser Nasreen Saeed.

Enough of Queiroz

Football

AFP, Madrid

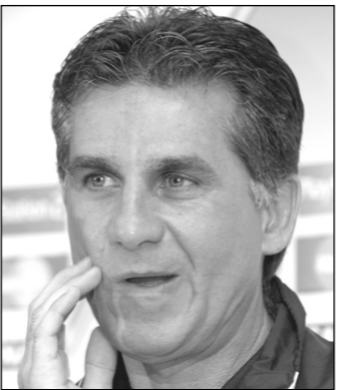
Real Madrid president Florentino Perez announced Monday that coach Carlos Queiroz had been dismissed and will be replaced next season by former Spanish national coach Jose Antonio Camacho.

Queiroz joined Real last summer, after being the assistant of Sir Alex Ferguson at Manchester United, but the Spanish giants finished this season without a trophy for the first time in five years.

Perez had few of the consoling words normally uttered in praise of departing coaches.

made a mistake contracting Queiroz, than I have to admit, we made a mistake," said Perez, with brutal honesty.

"It's a sad day for us. It was a disappointing end to the season.



CARLOS QUEIROZ

We are a reference for football around the world and we cannot endure another season like this," added the construction magnate.

Camacho, capped 81 times by Spain, comes to Madrid from the Portuguese side Benfica whom he guided to victory in the Portuguese Cup final two weeks ago.

"With the signing of (Argentine international defender Walter) Samuel and Camacho, we are opening a new era," added Perez.

Perez promised that he would allow Camacho to bring in new blood after Real's demoralising end to the season, which saw them lose a club record five consecutive games in the league.

MSC ride on Sumon treble

CU CORRESPONDENT

Brothers Union and Mohammedan Sporting Club won their respective matches in the CJKS-JDC First Division Hockey League at the MA Aziz Stadium in Chittagong yesterday.

Brothers Union recorded a massive 7-0 victory in the first match. Prashanta and Musa Mia scored two goals each while Issa Mia, Miraj and Asib Sumon netted one goal each.

Monirul Alam Sumon slammed a hatrick to help Mohammedan blank South Club 4-0 in the other match.

Zaheer joins Surrey for free

AFP, London

Indian Test seamer Zaheer Khan has joined former English county champions Surrey and will not be paid.

Zaheer is not allowed to sign as an overseas player as he does not possess a working visa but wants match practise to boost his hopes of a place in the India squad for the Asian Cup.

He played his first match against Essex in the National League after Pakistani spinner Saqlain Mushtaq was ruled out with a knee injury.

Ligue 1 Lyon hatrick

AFP, Paris

Lyon were officially crowned champions of the French league for a third successive year thanks to a 3-0 win over Lille.

Paris St Germain edged Bastia 1-0 to clinch the runners-up spot and the second automatic qualifying place for next season's Champions League leaving Monaco in third spot.

Monaco will now need to beat Porto in next week's Champions League final to avoid the qualifying rounds for the continent's top club competition next time around.

"We finished the season better than we did last time when we lost to Guingamp," said Lyon coach Paul Le Guen. "We had the best attack and the best defence."

PSG coach Vahid Halilhodzic said his side's second place finish should inspire them to round off the season with a French Cup win over second division Chateauroux next weekend.

At the other end of the table, back bottom Montpellier lost 4-0 at Rennes and were relegated along with Le Mans, despite their 3-0 over Lens, and Guingamp, 2-1 losers at Marseille.

WICB XI- BD SCORE

FROM PAGE 13 Total: (For 4 wkits in 46 overs) 124 To bat: Khaled Mashud, Enamul Haque jr, Tapash Baisya, Alamgir Kabir, Tareq Aziz.

Table with columns: Bowler, O, M, R, W. Rows: Lawson, Collymore, Rampaul, Banks, Bravo, Mohammed.

GM Nguyen

INTERNATIONAL MASTER DINESH KUMAR SHARMA AND LATER BEAT KRISHNA THAPA OF NEPAL IN THE EIGHTH ROUND TO SECURE 6.5 POINTS.

IM Abdullah Al Rakib, who shared the lead with Nguyen after six rounds, bagged full points from his seventh round game but shared points in the eighth round with local GM Ziaur Rahman. He is trailing the leader by half a points.

Zia, GM Niaz Murshed and Russian GM Alexander Fominyh were in the third position with five points each.

Single minded

FROM PAGE 13 There have been endless distractions threatening to impinge on their motivation and preparation since arriving in Zimbabwe 10 days ago.

They have played only one and a half days cricket, a two-day fixture against Zimbabwe 'A' -- in fact a 'B' side -- which ended by agreement three hours early.

They have been surrounded by a bitter dispute between the Zimbabwe Cricket Union and senior players which led to a two-Test series being scrapped.

The Australians spent Friday and Saturday last week waiting for news, playing golf, going fishing or moping about the hotel.

But on Sunday Buchanan put them through a punishing three-hour training session as if they were about to play a fifth Ashes Test against England with the series poised at 2-2 rather than a group of nervous local lads, half of whom are still teenagers.

"In the end the situation here is way out of our control. All we can control and all we are concerned with is what we achieve on the field and that's why these players are so good at what they do," he said.

Motivation and concentration are bywords ahead of matches against England, or India. But will the Australians relax against an understrength Zimbabwe side?

"They really amaze all of us how they are always able to get into their own game and their own world. Our job as coaches is to keep that environment around them so they feel good about what they're doing and then be prepared to play their best cricket," he said.

BFF ready

FROM PAGE 13

an and Korean football officials have agreed to send one team each from J-League and K-League because they will be free in January. Our neighbours have also showed interest to send national teams apart from Iraq and Vietnam," Sultan informed.

The BFF president, however, ruled out the possibilities of reviving the Agha Khan Gold Cup or launching the proposed club tournament among Bangladesh and Indian teams immediately.

He confirmed that FIFA president Sepp Blatter has also given his consent to inaugurate the Football Bhavan this year.

"Blatter is due to tour this part of Asia but the schedule is yet to be finalised. We hope that he will be here in any time between July and August."

Sultan added that the Japan Football Association has officially accepted BFF's proposal to provide fund for an age-group programme.

The BFF wanted 40,000 dollars to run its U-16 or U-18 training programme. The Japan government will also give equipment to the BFF for a gymnasium.

Houllier dismissed

Football

AFP, London

Liverpool announced Monday that manager Gerard Houllier was leaving the English Premiership club after six years in charge.

They said the former France coach was leaving with immediate effect.

The news brings to an end weeks of speculation that the Frenchman's time at Anfield was drawing to a close.

Houllier's departure was

announced on the club's website. He can expect a pay-off of around one million pounds and was believed to have signed a secrecy agreement - designed to stop him putting the boot into the club.

Houllier arrived at Liverpool in 1998 and despite the success of 2001 when Liverpool won the UEFA Cup, League Cup and FA Cup, fans have become increasingly frustrated at the club's inconsistent performances.

Charlton manager Alan Curbishley was favourite to replace him.



GERARD HOULLIER

But that announcement might not be made until chief executive Rick Parry returns from Spain in the next couple of days.

Liverpool chairman David Moores and his board did not give public backing to Houllier after he achieved the 'minimum requirement' of Champions League qualification by finishing fourth.

The Reds trailed Premiership champions Arsenal by 30 points and were 15 behind third-placed Manchester United.

Houllier won five trophies in 2001 and won the League Cup for a second time in 2003, but failed to return the club to the past glories of the 1970s and 1980s.

Houllier insisted he would take many great memories away with him from Anfield, where he has been manager since 1998.

"I arrived here six years ago as a Liverpool supporter and I leave as an even bigger supporter," he said.

"I may have left Liverpool, but Liverpool will not leave me. I will return to watch the team as a fan."

"I have four special memories that I take away with me," the Frenchman told www.liverpoolfc.tv.

"Michael Owen scoring the winner against Arsenal with his left foot (in the FA Cup final), Gary McAllister being handed the man-of-the-match award against Alaves (in the UEFA Cup), the mosaic when I was recovering from heart surgery and Steven Gerrard taking his daughter around the pitch on the last day of the season."

Parry added: "After considerable thought and discussion the board have decided to part company with the manager and Gerard has accepted this with typical good grace."

"We have always said we would review our position at the end of the season and that is what we have now done."

"Although we have reached the Champions League that is a minimum standard and not a goal."

"For a variety of reasons the board decided that change was necessary if we were to realistically challenge for the title next season."

Voller retains WC heroes



AFP, Frankfurt

Rudi Voller has stuck by the players that helped Germany reach the 2002 World Cup final in his 22-man squad for the 2004 European championships in Portugal named here on Monday.

Despite the recent 5-1 thrashing by Romania, Voller has chosen to keep the players that did so well in Japan and South Korea with the spine consisting of Bayern Munich captain Oliver Kahn, playmaker Michael Ballack, Liverpool's holding midfielder Dietmar Hamann and Bayer Leverkusen's Bernd Schneider.

"My squad is full of quality," enthused Voller.

"We have a good mixture of youth and experience." Voller also insisted he had no fears about the form of Bayern

midfielder Ballack, 27, claiming the player could be one of the stars of the tournament.

"Ballack has not had his best season but he is hungry to give his all," explained the former Roma striker.

"I hope he will be the same player he was at the 2002 World Cup."

Hannover striker Thomas Bradic, 29, is the shock inclusion drafted in despite making just one appearance against the United States back in 2002.

Former Bayer Leverkusen striker Oliver Neuville, now at Borussia Monchengladbach, makes way after a poor season.

Voller has left one space free to call up a player from the Under-21 team by June 2.

Cologne striker Lukas Podolski and Bayern midfielder Bastian Schweinsteiger are the favourites to make the step up.

Voller must do without Leverkusen midfielder Carsten Ramelow, who opted to retire, along with Bayern playmaker Sebastian

Deisler, 24, whose comeback from depression came too late.

Borussia Dortmund defender Christoph Metzelder, one of the revelations in the World Cup, is also absent after spending the entire season on the sidelines.

The World Cup finalists face Malta on Thursday before taking on Switzerland and Hungary ahead of the clash with Holland in Oporto on June 15 in the 2004 European championship opener.

GERMAN SQUAD

Goalkeepers: Oliver Kahn, Jens Lehmann, Timo Hildebrand; Defenders: Frank Baumann, Arne Friedrich, Philipp Lahm, Jens Nowotny, Christian Worns, Andreas Hinkel, Christian Rahn; Midfielders: Michael Ballack, Bastian Ernst, Torsten Frings, Dietmar Hamann, Jens Jeremies, Sebastian Kehl, Bernd Schneider, Paul Freier; Forwards: Fredi Bobic, Kevin Kuranyi, Thomas Bradic, Miroslav Klose

Chairman Viv bats

FROM PAGE 13

VR: I think there are plans made for 2007 like some of the nucleus of individuals who we have presently earmarked. But often we ignore these things because we are so business-minded. So when we think as we have a better understanding about the things that need to be done. It's not just hosting a 2007 World Cup but having the package to go with the carnival which means having a good team

Q: As outsiders, we have noticed extreme pride in the people of every island and there seems to be bitter rivalry also. Does that play a part on the West Indies cricket team's performance?

VR: I don't think that's a huge issue. People have always been a little insular at times. If you listen to the radio programmes of different islands, they all think that the team should be from that island. I think we are much wider than that but you may have some splinter groups here and there.

Q: There is no doubt that Brian Lara ranks as one of the legends of West Indies batting. How do you rate his overall contribution to Caribbean cricket?

VR: What I can say from his achievements is that he's a genius. To have accomplished the stuff he has, that's what geniuses are made of. I think the things that have let him down more than anything else is that collectively he hasn't quite hit the nail in the head in terms of bringing the forces together and hasn't brought the success that we craved for. He himself would like success not only as a batsman. But when you are in charge of a team, you would like to know that team has a successful era. I think that's the biggest disappointment at this stage.

Q: What is your opinion of the Bangladesh team after seeing

the side then?

VR: Presently I would say this that no one has shown the so-called commitment. I wouldn't say he is the best individual at this point but we have no options at this stage.

Q: Do you think that Lara could have accomplished more had he played in a more successful team or in an era?

VR: I doubt that. Whatever era you are asked to play under, you should make that your time. You can't think about what went by. You are given responsibilities and you have to be up for that. Look at the late Sir Frank Worrell. He used to mould those guys. That's what great captains do. This is what Brian Lara should be doing.

Q: You are a living legend to the current players. Do you also play the role of a guardian to the team you select?

VR: I try to be as helpful as possible. I think I have a fair idea about how the game should be played because I come from a very successful era. So there must be something that these individuals can learn from me.

Q: Among today's players in the West Indies, do you look at somebody and say to yourself, 'Hold on, he looks just like me?'

VR: There are a few guys and people say about Dwayne Smith and all that. But how long can we keep on saying that he looks like me? We want to see the achievement because that's what we back them for. It's my view as the chairman that talent only goes so far and then there comes a period called the cut-off time when we say his time is up, we expect production.

Q: What is your opinion of the Bangladesh team after seeing

them in the Caribbean?

VR: I think you have improved. I wouldn't say 100 per cent but may be 75 and that is pass mark, isn't it? I look at them in the field and they appear much fitter, they are more committed. It just seems that on a collective basis, there must have been a lot of work done to get them into that self-believing frame of mind. It's still going to take some time. Everything takes time.

Q: There are people who honestly believe that you can still do a far better job with the bat than some of the current players.

VR: I know. I meet people and they say you can still play and I say I'll think about it and I think it's great. But to do it is difficult (Laughs).

Brothers lift

FROM PAGE 13

Rising Star made 216-8. Nazmul Wahab Sumon grabbed three wickets for Brothers giving away 25 in his six overs and Pakistani Rashed Hanif took 2-34.

In reply, Brothers reached 222-5 in 45.4 overs when Nayeem whacked an over boundary in his unbeaten 17.

Rashed Hanif spearheaded the brothers essay with 52 not out, laced with two boundaries and two sixes. One down batsman Nazim Uddin followed him with 40 while opener Tamim Iqbal made 35.

Ibnul Haider, Ziaur Rashid, Reazul Huda and Sanwar Hossain took one wicket each for the vanquished.

CJKS vice president Dastagir Chowdhury distributed trophies among the winners as chief guest.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down words.

Solution time: 25 mins. Cryptogram grid and key: BLUU GCR L DCHLWCB. Yesterdays Cryptquip: I THINK I ONCE HEARD OUR INDUSTRIOUS EXTERMINATOR EXCLAIM, 'I MAKE MOUSE CALLS!' Today's Cryptquip Clue: Z equals E

Cryptogram puzzle grid with letters C D V M R Z M H Z P Z L U U K.

CRYPTOQUIP C D V M R Z M H Z P Z L U U K U C X Z V W M V W Q E K V G L P X V C V Q J J M V Z K M Q B M Q U E B L U U G C R L D C H L W C B Yesterdays Cryptquip: I THINK I ONCE HEARD OUR INDUSTRIOUS EXTERMINATOR EXCLAIM, 'I MAKE MOUSE CALLS!' Today's Cryptquip Clue: Z equals E