



THE FUTURE IS HERE: The young footballers of the country wait for the inauguration of the Pioneer League at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Slater set to say goodbye

AFP, Sydney
Former Australian Test opener Michael Slater is set to announce his retirement here on Wednesday.

A press conference has been scheduled where Slater is expected to call it a day.

Slater's career has been in danger of finishing for the past six months after he was hospitalised with reactive arthritis in December.

Unable to walk for some time because of the disease, Slater took no part in the latter half of the Australian season for New South Wales.

At 34, he would have trouble forcing his way back in the NSW line-up and his hopes of a Test recall have vanished.

Slater made his Test debut on the 1993 Ashes tour to England and played 74 Tests, scoring 5,312 runs at an average of 42.83 with 14 centuries.

His top score was 219 against Sri Lanka in Perth in 1995-96.

He played 216 first-class matches over 12 years for Australia, NSW and Derbyshire, scoring 14,912 runs at 40.85.

Slater will be remembered as a shot-maker who formed one half of Australia's most productive opening partnership with former skipper Mark Taylor.

India, SA look for a way out

Cricket
REUTERS/AFP, New Delhi
A cramped international schedule has caused itinerary problems for South Africa's tour to India later this year, India's cricket board said on Monday.

The two boards were unable to agree whether they should play only Tests or one-dayers during the November series because there was no time to complete a full series, Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) president Jagmohan Dalmiya said in a statement.

"The real problem is that we are having to squeeze in a two-month schedule into a one-month capsule," Dalmiya said.

The United Cricket Board (UCB) of South Africa has proposed a one-day tour but the BCCI wants a Test series, he added.

Dalmiya said he would discuss the issue with UCB president Raymond Mali during an International Cricket Council (ICC) meet in Dubai this week, but

added the matter, if unresolved, could go before the ICC.

According to the terms of reciprocation, South Africa would have been expected to play three Tests and seven one-day matches, the number played by India on their last tour of South Africa in 2001-02.

With both teams free to face each other only in November, it is impossible to fit in that many games during the four-week period.

Both teams play in the ICC Champions Trophy in England in September. India then host Australia for four Tests in October-November while England are to begin their South Africa tour in early December.

There has already been some controversy after the BCCI said that it would not be able to provide guarantees that South Africans Herschelle Gibbs and Nicky Boje will not face action by Indian police when they arrive for the tour.

Dalmiya said he was unable to give a guarantee saying the Indian board had no jurisdiction in police matters.

Opening batsman Gibbs and

spinner Boje were implicated in the match-fixing charges that brought down late South African captain Hansie Cronje on the country's last tour to India, in 2000.

Dalmiya, however, blamed the ICC for the tour impasse, saying the 10-year Test calendar was a "blunder."

The UCB has expressed unhappiness over the itinerary submitted by India, saying the Indians were indifferent towards the tour.

But Dalmiya, a former ICC president, said the 10-year schedule drawn up for Test nations by the sport's world governing body was causing problems in drawing up the itinerary.

"If I have to blame someone, it would be the ICC for the blunder in drawing up the 10-year schedule."

"The South Africans have declined to postpone England's tour by a week or two, which gives us less than a month to organise something," Dalmiya said.

"But it's not as serious as it is being made out in the media. I am meeting UCB president Ray Mali in Dubai on Thursday and I am sure a solution will be found."

'Roteiro' kicks

FROM PAGE 13
But the ball counts as fans some of the world's best players, including England's David Beckham and France's Zinedine Zidane.

"The most important thing for me is to know that I can rely on the ball to go exactly where I want it to go," said Beckham after the ball was launched earlier this year.

"I think it is great to kick and it's going to be a great ball to play with. Keepers are going to have a very tough time," the Real Madrid star, who has a sponsorship deal with Adidas, added.

Portugal winger Cristiano Ronaldo, who plays for Manchester United, said he is unfazed by the new ball.

"It is faster than other balls and curves more, but I believe it is a matter of getting used to it. For me any ball will do," he said.

Streak for Zimbabwe ban

Cricket
AFP, London
Heath Streak, the deposed Zimbabwe captain, has called for his country to be banned from all international cricket until the International Cricket Council (ICC) investigates allegations of racial discrimination against the Zimbabwe Cricket Union (ZCU).

Streak's claims that Zimbabwe's selectors were discriminating against white players led to him being sacked as captain in April and provoked 15 rebels to walk out.

"I don't think other countries should be playing Test or one-day cricket against Zimbabwe until the current crisis has been resolved," he told the Daily Telegraph.

"It's a difficult one for the ICC,

but they maybe have to force the two parties involved to talk and to try to come up with some sort of resolution.

"I hope that things are redeemable and that the damage can be repaired."

"But there is increasing polarisation between the two parties, and the longer it goes on the more difficult it's going to be to get an agreement."

Streak, who has decided to move to England to play for Warwickshire, insisted his demand for an international ban was based on cricketing rather than political reasons.

"Players are being discriminated against because they are white, which is the main problem," he said.

"But it isn't a purely black and white thing. There's also regional discrimination as well."

Streak had already decided to play county cricket before falling out with the ZCU but he now fears his international career is over.

"I hope that my Zimbabwe career isn't finished. But, in my heart of hearts, it's difficult to see how I can play again unless the ICC get involved."

Zimbabwe's future as a Test team will be discussed when cricket chiefs from India, South Africa and Australia meet ZCU boss Peter Chingoka in Dubai on Thursday.

Sources say the Dubai discussions about the on-going crisis will form the basis for a final decision on Zimbabwe's future at the ICC's annual conference in June.

England are due to tour Zimbabwe in October but last month's Test series with Australia was suspended after Zimbabwe were humiliated by Sri Lanka.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 Symbol of intrigue
4 Undergo recession
7 KFC enhancer
11 Luau entertainment
13 By way of vicinity
15 "Brockovich"
16 Wapiti
17 Almost black
18 November birthstone
20 Risque
22 Snoop Dogg's genre
24 Squashed squares
28 Dolphin variety
32 Egg-shaped
33 Emanation
34 Tie up the phone
36 Sea eagle
37 Throw, as in mud

DOWN
1 Sharpen
2 Continental coin
3 Radar image
4 First lady
5 George W.'s predecessor
6 One who's rolling in dough?
7 In large amounts
8 Mound
9 Gun the engine
10 Inlet
12 Big expense
19 Use the remote
21 Abbott's first baseman
23 Boxer
25 Oliver Twist's request
26 Cries
27 Fateful day at the Forum
28 Long, deep cut
29 Hold sway
30 Met melody
31 Blue
35 Story of a lifetime?
38 Pantheon member
40 Roscoe
42 Original
45 Paddock papa
47 Suitable
48 Catch sight of
49 Kennedy matriarch
50 "Car Talk" venue
51 Perfume-label word
52 B&B
54 Swelled head

Solution time: 24 mins.

CRYPTOQUIP
X M W M Q A Q R R M A J C X M S
R M Q Y X U Q V V M U W C R R F Y S
A N G C W A F A C B N Q C V V W C
Q A J X B Q G V M N ?
Saturday's Cryptiquip: I ONCE SAW A VERY HUGE DEBRIS STACK AND SAW "NOBODY KNOWS THE RUBBLE I'VE SEEN!"
Today's Cryptiquip Clue: R equals P

The Cryptiquip 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.

CROSSWORD
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 60 61

CRYPTOQUIP
X M W M Q A Q R R M A J C X M S
R M Q Y X U Q V V M U W C R R F Y S
A N G C W A F A C B N Q C V V W C
Q A J X B Q G V M N ?
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Myskina moves up

AFP, Miami
Russia's Anastasia Myskina jumped from fifth to third in the WTA rankings released here Monday as a result of her victory over compatriot Elena Dementieva in Saturday's French Open final.

Myskina, 23, reached the highest ranking of her career, jumping past France's Amelie Mauresmo and American Lindsay Davenport.

Despite losing the final, Dementieva leaped from 10th to sixth in the rankings.

Belgians Justine Henin-Hardene and Kim Clijsters remained solidly atop the rankings. American semi-finalist Jennifer Capriati fell one spot to seventh, one place ahead of compatriot Venus Williams, who gained a position.

Former world number one Serena Williams tumbled from seventh to 11th position as she prepares to begin the defense of her Wimbledon crown later this month.

1. Justine Henin-Hardene (BEL) 5791
2. Kim Clijsters (BEL) 5069
3. Anastasia Myskina (RUS) 3816
4. Amelie Mauresmo (FRA) 3502
5. Lindsay Davenport (USA) 3080
6. Elena Dementieva (RUS) 3038
7. Jennifer Capriati (USA) 2887
8. Venus Williams (USA) 2406
9. Paola Suarez (ARG) 2081
10. Svetlana Kuznetsova (RUS) 2069

Rating Chess

SPORTS REPORTER
Thirty players jointly led the table with full two points each after end of the second round games of the Open FIDE Rating Chess competition at the NSC yesterday.

In this round, International Master Abdullah Al Rakib beat Sabab, FIDE Master Abu Sufian Shakil beat Zaker, Shiekh Nasir Ahmed beat Badrul, Khondkar Aminul Islam beat Sumon, Saifuddin Lavlu beat Riyad, Abdul Maleq beat Shamim, Debraj beat Afzal, Rani Hamid beat Masuda, Abdur Rouf beat Arman, Mohammad Javed beat Siraj, Mahfuzur Rahman Emon beat Chapal while Parag drew with Farhad.

CJKS school TT

CU CORRESPONDENT
Government Muslim High School moved into the final of CJKS-Aniruddha Barua Ani Memorial School table tennis competition yesterday.

Government Muslim High School defeated Collegiate High School in the second semi final 3-0 at the CJKS gymnasium.

In today's group final they play Municipal Model High School.

SL Tests crucial for McGrath

AFP, Sydney
Australia's two-Test cricket series against Sri Lanka next month was crucial for paceman Glenn McGrath, chief selector Trevor Hohns said on Tuesday.

Out of Test cricket for almost a year with ankle problems, McGrath had unflattering returns in his comeback to international one-day cricket in Zimbabwe last month.

National selection panel chairman Hohns admitted McGrath was facing a important series to get back into Test cricket.

"He's not so much under pressure," Hohns said on Tuesday. "But it's an important one for him... we certainly need to find out what's left there."

If McGrath cannot trouble Sri Lanka's batsmen in Darwin and Cairns in early July, his Test future will be in serious doubt.

In 95 Tests McGrath has taken 430 wickets -- second only to leg-spinner Shane Warne (517) among Australians, and sixth on the all-time list.

With five more wickets he will have only Muttiah Muralitharan, Courtney Walsh and Warne ahead of him.

Fellow fast bowler Brad Williams came home early from the tour of Zimbabwe with a back strain.

Scans cleared him of any serious damage but he's no certainty to play against Sri Lanka.

"At this stage, if Brad Williams is chosen, it will be subject to a fitness test," Hohns said.

If Williams wasn't passed fit it would open the door for young South Australian quick Shaun Tait.

Asians go all out



AFP, Hong Kong
Asian football's heavyweights will seek to edge closer to a place in the 2006 World Cup finals as the region's marathon qualifying tournament takes place Wednesday.

Three of Asia's strongest sides -- Japan, South Korea and China -- head into the latest round brimming with confidence after recent morale-boosting victories over European opposition.

Japan are likely extend their lead at the top of Group 3 and maintain their 100 per cent start to qualifying when they take on India in Saitama.

The Japanese have just returned home from a successful tour of Europe which included an impressive victory over the Czech Republic in Prague and a 1-1 draw with England in Manchester last week.

Japan's coach Zico has seen injuries deprive him of key players, including Europe-based stars Hidetoshi Nakata and Junichi Inamoto.

But the Brazilian legend is confident his side will be too strong for India and has been toying with a six-man attack in training.

Nevertheless Zico has warned Japan against complacency.

"We must forget everything about playing squarely against European powerhouses, not to become overconfident. If we underestimate India, we will have a slap in the face," Zico warned.

"We must be patient to score and try to put pressure on them from the very beginning of the game."

A total of 32 teams split into eight groups of four are taking part in Asia's World Cup qualifying tournament. The eight group winners advance to final qualifying next year.

In other matches Wednesday, coach-less South Korea play Vietnam looking for a victory to preserve their lead at the top of Group 7.

South Korea, who reached the semi-finals of the World Cup two years ago, have had a shaky spell culminating in a humiliating 0-0 draw against the Maldives in their most recent qualifier in March.

That result led to the sacking of coach Humberto Coelho, but a 2-1 win over Turkey last Saturday has restored some confidence.

In Group 4, meanwhile, China should have little difficulty in overcoming Malaysia in Tianjin to make it three wins out of three.

China, coached by legendary former Dutch international Arie Haan, bounced back from a disap-

trous tour of Europe earlier this year to post a 2-1 victory over Hungary last week.

Haan, who is also building towards July's Asian Cup to be hosted by China, said the win over the Hungarians had sent confidence pumping through his team.

"The excitement from the victory against Hungary is still in the team and will continue against Malaysia," said Haan, a member of the legendary 'total football' Netherlands teams of the 1970s.

China are hot favourites, having won their opening two games in Group 4 of the Asian Zone qualifiers, beating minnows Hong Kong 1-0, and crucially, sealing a 1-0 victory over fancied Kuwait.

Malaysia, on the other hand, have lost both their opening clashes.

"Although we won't be complacent, there will be no problem, we will win the match," Chinese midfielder Li Xiaopeng told reporters at the team's training camp in Xianghe, Hebei province.

Amongst the powerful West Asian teams, Saudi Arabia face a crucial game with Turkmenistan to determine who goes top in Group 8. Both sides are level on six points after the opening two rounds.

Another intriguing battle is on the cards in Tehran, where unbeaten Iran and Jordan meet in Group 1.

Pakistan rope in Richards

Cricket
AFP, Karachi
The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Monday said they had finally convinced former South African great Barry Richards to serve as cricket consultant for their national academy in Lahore.

Richards will come for 30 days in a year as consultant for not only the national academy but would add to our commitment to secure our future," PCB chief executive Ramiz Raja told AFP.

Richards, who played four Tests in 1969-70 as a dashing opener before South Africa were banned for the country's apartheid policies, rejected the PCB's offer to become full time coach two years ago due to his commitments as television commentator.

Richards is the second foreigner Pakistan has sought to train its academy trainees after former Australian captain Greg Chappell agreed to serve as consultant and

Seedorf misses out for Dutch

AFP, Lisbon
Clarence Seedorf is to miss Holland's opening European Championships Group D tussle with Germany with a hamstring strain, coach Dick Advocaat revealed.

"He will certainly be unavailable for a week," Advocaat told a tournament website euro2004.com.

The 28-year-old AC Milan star with 70 caps to his name will have to rest for five days and then try to resume training after suffering the injury in last week's friendly loss to the Republic of Ireland in Amsterdam.

First tests on Sunday just after the match showed no sign of a serious injury but further tests Monday suggested sufficient damage to persuade the Dutch not to take any chances as they chase their second continental crown after 1988.

Against the Germans, whom the Dutch beat on the way to their triumph 16 years ago, Seedorf's midfield place will go to Rafael Van der Vaart of Ajax.

Group D also comprises the Czech Republic, runners-up in 1996, and Euro virgins Latvia.

Catching gets batting ache

FROM PAGE 13
where any one could win the series."

Lara said he was prepared to carry on as captain as he is totally motivated.

"I'm always committed to lead this team. Over the last three and a half days I was very committed to lead this team and very committed to win. And if I'm committed to win it means I'm committed long-term."

Final scoreboard on the fourth day of the second and final Test between Bangladesh and the West Indies at Sabina Park in Jamaica on Monday:

BANGLADESH: First innings 284 (Baisya 48, Saleh 47, Mashud 39, Rafique 30; Banks 4-87, Collins 3-64)
WEST INDIES: First innings 559 for 4 declared (Sarwan 261 not out, Lara 120, Chanderpaul 101 not out, Devon 44; Aziz 1-76, Baisya 1-99, Rafique 1-100)

BANGLADESH: Second innings (overnight 66-3)
Omar C Dwayne b Best 5
Hannan lbw b Collins 10
Bashar lbw b Collins 77
Saleh C Dwayne b Collins 0
Manjarul C Lara b Sarwan 35
Ashraf C Lara b Sarwan 9
Mushfiq C Dwayne b Collins 0
Mashud C Sarwan b Banks 0
Rafique b Collins 2
Baisya C Sarwan b Collins 3
Aziz not out 5
Extras: (b-8, lb-6, w-8, nb-8) 30
Total: (All out in 51 overs) 176
Fall of wickets: 1-16, 2-24, 3-34, 4-154, 5-154, 6-154, 7-155, 8-160, 9-164

BANGLADESH-WINDIES TEST AVERAGES

REUTERS, London
Averages for the two-Test series between Bangladesh and the West Indies which ended in Jamaica on Monday:

BANGLADESH										
Batsman	M	I	NO	RUNS	HS	AVE	SR	100	50	
H Bashar	2	4	0	235	113	58.75	80.20	1	1	
K Mashud	2	4	1	144	103*	48.00	37.69	1	-	
M Rafique	2	4	0	172	111	43.00	63.00	1	-	
R Saleh	2	4	0	124	51	31.00	34.83	-	1	
MAshraful	2	4	0	107	81	26.75	36.27	-	1	
T Baisya	2	4	0	86	48	21.50	45.98	-	-	
M Islam	1	2	0	42	35	21.00	35.89	-	-	
J Omar	2	4	0	64	32	16.00	33.00	-	-	
M Rahman	2	4	0	23	22	5.75	25.50	-	-	
H Sarker	2	4	0	19	10	4.75	46.34	-	-	
F Hossain	1	2	0	7	5	3.50	25.92	-	-	
Tareq Aziz	2	4	4	22	10*	-	18.64	-	-	

WEST INDIES										
Bowler	M	O	M	R	W	Ave	Best	5	10	
M Rahman	2	64.4	11	217	4	54.25	4-65	-	-	
M Rafique	2	79	15	221	4	55.25	3-90	-	-	
T Baisya	2	54	10	212	3	70.66	2-87	-	-	
Tareq Aziz	2	48	6	202	1	202.00	1-76	-	-	
MAshraful	2	4	1	19	0	-	-	-	-	
Rajin Saleh	2	13	1	36	0	-	-	-	-	
M Islam	1	28	2	100	0	-	-	-	-	

WEST INDIES										
Batsman	M	I	NO	RUNS	HS	AVE	SR	100	50	
R Sarwan	2	2	1	301	261*	301.00	62.97	1	1	
C Gayle	2	3	1	221	141	110.50	54.97	1	1	
S Chanderpaul	2	2	1	108	101*	108.00	47.78	1	-	
Brian Lara	2	2	0	173	120	86.50	77.57	1	1	
Devon Smith	2	3	1	84	44	42.00	44.91	-	-	
Dwayne Smith	2	1	0	42	42	42.00	60.86	-	-	
Fidel Edwards	2	1	0	5	5	5.00	83.33	-	-	
Pedro Collins	2	1	0	4	4	4.00	13.33	-	-	
Tino Best	2	2	0	7	4	3.50	18.42	-	-	
J Lawson	1	1	0	0	0	0.00	0.00	-	-	
Ridley Jacobs	2	1	1	46	46*	-	47.42	-	-	
Omar Banks	1	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	

Novak advances

AFP, Halle
Fourth seed Czech Jiri Novak, the highest seeded to play on Monday, easily moved into the second round of the 790,000-euro ATP grass court event here with a 6-2, 6-2 win over Croatian Ivan Ljubicic.

The seeds did not all have their own way however.

Romanian Andrei Pavel, the seventh seed, fell to Germany's Alexander Popp 1-6, 6-4, 6-4 and home hope Tommy Haas, back on grass three years after his last match on the surface and who benefited from a wildcard, went through 6-3, 6-4 against Spain's eighth seed Feliciano Lopez.

Haas, who had a shoulder injury for most of last season and who won at Houston this year, looks to have come into form following below-par showings during the clay season.

Sixth seed Mardy Fish had a quick victory, knocking out 2000 champion David Prinosil of Germany 6-4, 6-2, the American looking refreshed after missing the French Open because of injury.

France's Arnaud Clement also further boosted his Wimbledon preparations with a 6-1, 6-4 win over Germany's Alexander Waske.