

Proteas soup up one-day squad

AFP, Centurion

South Africa announced six changes Tuesday to their one-day squad to play against England in a seven-match series starting in Johannesburg on Sunday.

Five players were dropped from the squad that lost all five matches in Sri Lanka last year and then failed to advance beyond the group stage in the ICC Champions Trophy in England last September.

Axed were Martin van Jaarsveld, Lance Klusener, JP Duminy, Alan Dawson and Robin Peterson.

Six players were brought into a 15-man party for the first four matches. The only uncapped player is AB de Villiers, the 20-year-old batsman who made 92 and 109 in the fifth Test which ended at Centurion Tuesday.

Recalled were Adam Bacher, Andrew Hall, Ashwell Prince, Justin Kemp and Andre Nel.

Bacher, 31, an opening batsman and medium-pace bowler, last played for South Africa in 1997-98.

SQUAD

Graeme Smith (captain), Nicky Boje (vice-captain), Adam Bacher, Mark Boucher, AB de Villiers, Herschelle Gibbs, Andrew Hall, Jacques Kallis, Justin Kemp, Charl Langeveldt, Andre Nel, Makhaya Ntini, Ashwell Prince, Shaun Pollock, Jacques Rudolph.

Rafique return

FROM PAGE 13

"will join the A team later," said Rafique.

The chief selector was tight-lipped about the prospects of middle-order batsman Al Shahrir who made a brilliant match-saving century against Zimbabwe in a three-day warm-up game in Chittagong.

Rafique also said that they were thinking of selecting a strong side for next month's Duleep Trophy competition in India.

"We are yet to decide who will lead that side. We will announce a 15-member team for the first class competition after this series. We have decided to pick a mixed side including current and out of favour national caps and one or two promising faces," said Rafique adding that ex-national captain Naimur Rahman was very much under consideration for the Duleep Trophy.

Weather worries

FROM PAGE 13

Ponting said Symonds might be promoted in the order, with regular number four Damien Martyn being rested.

All-rounder Shane Watson, bowler Michael Kasprowicz and Martyn were left out of the Australian team and replaced by batsman Simon Katich, spinner Brad Hogg and pace bowler Jason Gillespie.

TEAMS

AUSTRALIA: Ricky Ponting (captain), Matthew Hayden, Michael Clarke, Darren Lehmann, Andrew Symonds, Simon Katich, Brad Haddin, Brad Hogg, Brett Lee, Jason Gillespie, Glenn McGrath.

WEST INDIES (from): Brian Lara (captain), Shivnarine Chanderpaul, Chris Gayle, Wavell Hinds, Ramnaresh Sarwan, Marlon Samuels, Dwayne Bravo, Ryan Hinds, Courtney Browne, Ian Bradshaw, Pedro Collins, Mervyn Dillon, Leon King, Xavier Marshall.

England set

FROM PAGE 13

Fall of wickets: 1-17, 2-29, 3-256, 4-267, 5-276, 6-296
Did not bat: Pollock, Boje, Ntini, Nel, Bowler Hoggard 14 2 51 1 Flintoff 13 2 46 2 Giles 11 1 50 0 SJones 19 2 74 1 Harmison 16 2 59 2



THAT'S THE WAY OUT: Wimbledon champion Maria Sharapova makes a point during her match with fellow Russian and US Open winner Svetlana Kuznetsova at the Australian Open yesterday.

Bergkamp's ideal goodbye plan

Football

AFP, London

Arsenal striker Dennis Bergkamp hopes to end his playing career when Arsenal bid farewell to their historic Highbury home in north London next season.

Bergkamp, 36 in May, proved he still had what it took to succeed in the Premiership when he scored Arsenal's winner in Sunday's 1-0 win against Newcastle at Highbury on Sunday with a sublime finish.

Arsenal are set to move to their new multi-million pound home at nearby Ashburton Grove at the end of the next campaign but whether the former Dutch international will then still be a part of their plans is uncertain.

Bergkamp arrived at Highbury 10 years ago for 7.5 million pounds and his capture from Inter Milan was arguably manager Bruce Rioch's most important decision during his short period in charge of Arsenal before Arsene Wenger took over in 1996.

"As for the future, I feel good," said Bergkamp, whose fear of flying has forced him out of several key Champions League matches for the

club over the years.

"It would be nice to have another year, to experience the last year at Highbury. It has been a big part of my life. But we will see. Everything will be sorted out at the end of the season.

"My decision would be to have another year. But I don't know what will happen. Sometimes it is difficult to know what the boss and the club

are thinking. I am in my 10th year at the club.

"As for a testimonial, we are thinking about it. But I am still focusing on my playing career and we will have to see what happens. A testimonial, as I see it, is the last game of your career," added Bergkamp, who was part of the Dutch teams that were knocked out on penalties in both the 1998 World

Cup and the Euro 2000 semi-finals.

Meanwhile Arsenal's prolific French international striker Thierry Henry backed Bergkamp's call for another year at Highbury.

"He fancies playing another year. I also fancy him playing for another year. Without saying anything bad about anyone, when Dennis plays, I only concentrate on going behind the defence," Henry said. "When he is not there, I have to drop back."

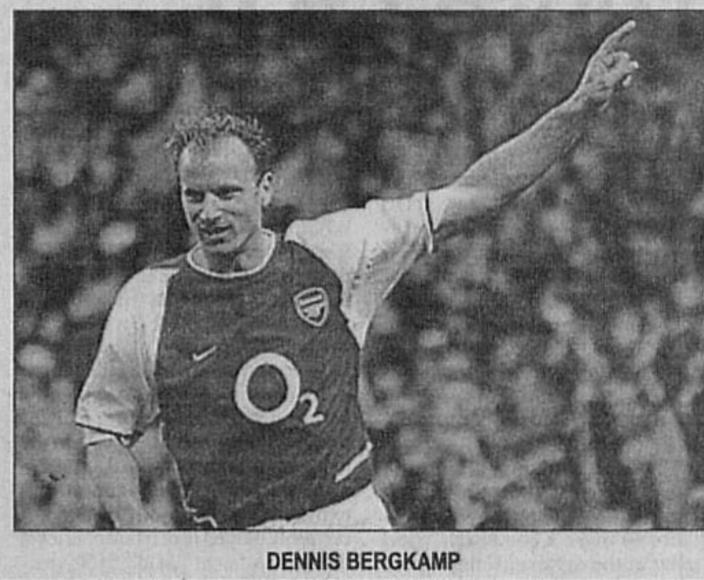
"I have played with a lot of great players and he is amazing. He always has a great desire when he is on the pitch and you can never complain about him."

"At his age, to be doing what he is doing, it is unbelievable. I don't know if I will still be playing at his age. He is a great guy."

Arsenal's latest win reduced the gap on leaders Chelsea to 10 points, still a commanding advantage, but Bergkamp refused to concede the title just yet.

"It was so important to get a result against Newcastle. As for the gap between us and Chelsea, you never know. It will be difficult but we try not to look at the table."

"We need to start playing like we used to. We can't do anything about Chelsea. We have lost too many points and that is our own fault."



DENNIS BERGKAMP

Serena, Sharapova set for showdown

Australian Open

AFP, Melbourne

Serena Williams sounded a warning to her teenage nemesis Maria Sharapova as the two rivals emerged from the Melbourne Park furnace to reach the Australian Open semifinals Tuesday.

"I remember those moments, and I just kept fighting, just trying to take as much time as I can and fight."

Williams has a losing 2-1 record against 17-year-old Sharapova, with painful defeats coming last season in the Wimbledon final and the WTA Tour Championships in Los Angeles.

Now Williams and Sharapova will meet again in the last four on Thursday after winning quarterfinals played in fierce heat. And with more hot weather forecast, the temperatures could well tip the scales in Williams' favour.

Unquestionably, it was the former world number two said that Williams had made the temperatures hard but she put the defeat down to an inexplicable collapse that saw her game fall to pieces in the second and third sets.

"I was very focused and I played very well first set," Kuznetsova said.

"And after that something happened, so I just stopped. I mean, I just stopped playing. My body was there, but my mind wasn't there at all."

"I can't blame the heat as an excuse. It's a lie. I think I was coping with it better than Maria, I feel okay."

But while Sharapova and Kuznetsova looked drained after their tie, seventh-seed Williams -- the 2003 champion -- appeared fresher than ever after romping past Mauresmo in 1 hr 11 min.

"I feel great," said Williams, used to playing and training in the heat and humidity of Florida. "I played a really solid match. I'm used to making about 40 errors but today I made a lot less."

Williams has admitted afterwards that she had been struggling.

"I need a wheelchair right now," she said after completing an energy-sapping victory in 2hr 17min.

"I was just trying to tell myself

mentally just to get through it," she said, adding that gruelling winter conditioning had paid off.

"I kept thinking back in my off-season, you know, how hard it was when I was training physically, and I thought I couldn't go any more, but I knew that I had some more even though my body thought I didn't."

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REVISED TOUR OF NZ SL bring in 2 rookies

REUTERS, Colombo

Sri Lanka have selected two uncapped quick bowlers in a 24-man training pool for their rescheduled two-Test tour of New Zealand in April.

Channaka Welagedera and Nandika Ranjith are both left-armers.

Welagedera, 23, was called up after performing impressively for the Sri Lanka Cricket Academy while touring Sharjah and Bangladesh last year.

Ranjith, 32, has been pushing for selection for several years but has been overlooked despite an excellent first class record of 21 wickets in 54 matches at 25.75.

SQUAD

Marvan Atapattu, Mahela Jayawardene, Sanath Jayasuriya, Muttiah Muralitharan, Kumar Sangakkara, Ian Daniel, Samay Jayathilaka, Tillakaratne Dilshan, Thilan Samaraweera, Jehan Mubarak, Russell Arnold, Chaminda Vaas, Prasanna Jayawardene, Dilhari Fernando, Nuwan Zoyya, Lasith Malinga, Farveez Maharoof, Nuwan Kulasekara, Upul Chandana, Kaushal Kularachchi, Rangana Herath, Thilina Kandamby, Nandika Ranjith, Channaka Welagedera.

The French world number two said that Williams had reduced her to a hobbling passenger, barely able to move around the court.

Williams, who was forced to withdraw from last year's Australian Open with a back strain just before the quarterfinals, said she had been afraid of injuring herself more seriously as a result.

"Tennis is already tough when you're 100 percent, when you're 50 percent, when you're not moving so well on both sides, it's getting tougher and tougher," Williams said.

"I need a wheelchair right now," she said after completing an energy-sapping victory in 2hr 17min.

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Hoyzer could have fixed more games

Football

AFP, Frankfurt

German referee Robert Hoyzer, suspected of fixing a German Cup match on which he had bet money, could have fixed other matches, the German football federation (DFB) said on Monday.

DFB director general Theo Zwanziger said he could have fixed five matches in all: two in the second division and three in the northern regional division (or third division).

The DFB has decided to open an investigation while the Brunswick prosecutors office has already launched an inquiry into the SC Paderborn versus SV Hamburg match on August 21 last year in which 25-year-old Hoyzer officiated.

Hoyzer, regarded as one of the biggest refereeing talents in

Germany, came under the microscope after regional side Paderborn came from 2-0 down to defeat Hamburg 4-2.

Hoyzer gave Paderborn two questionable penalties and sent off Hamburg's Belgian striker Emile Mpenza for backchat.

The DFB first got whiff of scandal on Wednesday last week and their disciplinary commission spoke to Hoyzer and others on Friday.

"I have never bet on matches when I was the referee," said Hoyzer in Monday's Bild newspaper. Hoyzer, a referee since 1994, resigned on Saturday but denied that it proved he was guilty. "I will defend myself," he said.

The DFB president Gerhard Mayer-Vorfelder confirmed Monday that they are considering implementing a ban preventing all players, referees and club management from betting on football matches.

"It's always nice to learn that your work is appreciated," Hoyzer was quoted as saying in La Gazzetta dello Sport on Tuesday.