

'Vaughan rude & dismissive'

Match referee Clive Lloyd has accused England captain Michael Vaughan of displaying a "dismissive and rude attitude" at a disciplinary hearing during the fourth Test in Johannesburg.

Vaughan was fined his entire match fee, an estimated 5,500 pounds (10,350 dollars), after criticising umpires Steve Bucknor and Aleem Dar for ending play early because of bad light on the second day.

The Cape Argus newspaper quoted Lloyd on Saturday as saying Vaughan's attitude at the hearing had been a significant factor in deciding his punishment.

"I would have given him a lesser fine if it were not for that, but I stopped short of banning him for the last Test," Lloyd. "I have respect for the England captain and I expected the same from him."

"If he doesn't respect me he should at least respect the position (of match referee), but he made matters worse for himself with his dismissive and rude attitude."

ODI time

Whereas England's one-day starting line-up is likely to show major changes from the Test team, the differences between South Africa's Test and one-day sides are likely to be minimal, although big-hitting all-rounder Justin Kemp may get his first start in the national team in three years.

South Africa have dominated the one-day matches on two previous tours by England teams, winning nine and losing only two of 11 contests. This time around, it could be much closer.

TEAMS

SOUTH AFRICA (from): Graeme Smith (captain), Adam Bacher, Nicky Boje, 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.

ENGLAND (from): Michael Vaughan (captain), Kabir Ali, James Anderson, Gareth Batty, Ian Bell, Paul Collingwood, Ashley Giles, Darren Gough, Steve Harmison, Matthew Hoggard, Geraint Jones, Kevin Pietersen, Vikram Solanki, Andrew Strauss, Marcus Trescothick, Alex Wharf.

Who's destiny's

FROM PAGE 13 "But if I will be focused as I was against Federer and as positive as I was against him, I think it should be good enough to have a chance at least. I think I will have a chance."

Hewitt has been one of the great stories of the century Australian Open. Fighting back from the brink to win four five-setters against Rafael Nadal and David Nalbandian, before coming from behind to blow away second seed Andy Roddick in the semifinal. The feisty Aussie has been on court for a total of 17hr 32min, opposed to Safin's 15hrs and although troubled by a right hip injury will not quit even when the odds appear stacked against him.

The pair are 5-5 in their meetings, but on the hardcourt surface Hewitt leads 3-2. This is their first encounter in a Grand Slam.

"I'm taking a month off after this next match on Sunday. So I'm not playing until the Davis Cup (against Austria) in Sydney," Hewitt said.

"I've known that the whole time. That's why I decided to do all my hard work leading into the Australian summer, and basically through December and through the hot period and get used to the conditions and everything, and get my body in as good a shape as possible."

"I was going to give myself the best possible chance, knowing that I was going to have a rest straight afterwards."



Indian cricket superstar Sachin Tendulkar (2nd from R), Bollywood star Aamir Khan (3rd from L, middle row) and former Indian cricket captain Kapil Dev (behind Khan), with other cricketers, are seen with tsunami affected children from Tamil Nadu town of Nagapattinam prior to the start of the Airtel Cup, a fundraising game, at the Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai on Saturday.

Akhtar disappointed over fitness, not performance

Cricket

Express Pakistan fast bowler Shoaib Akhtar said Saturday his injury in Australia was disappointing but insisted that his performance was not below the mark.

"I am disappointed to have fitness problems which forced me to return from the Australian tour in the last phase but you can't say my tour was disappointing," Akhtar told AFP on return.

The 29-year-old pace bowler injured his hamstring in Pakistan's tri-series match against the West Indies last week and needs to prove his fitness to selectors ahead of next month's tour of India.

"I played the Sydney Test with injury, otherwise I took eleven wickets in the first two Tests which was not disappointing, and because of my fellow pacer Mohammad Sami also falling injured, our bowling failed in the last Test."

"We caught Australia 78-5 in the first Test and 170-5 in the second but let them off. Captain Inzamamul Haq's injury which prevented him from playing in the last two Tests was also a major setback."

He admitted his regular breakdowns with injury would harm his reputation.

"I know I have to raise my fitness levels but I assure everyone that I never fall short in commitment," Akhtar said.

Akhtar's fast bowling predecessors for Pakistan, Wasim Akram and Waqar Younis, have both launched attacks on

his recurring breakdowns, reportedly saying "an unfit Akhtar is not what Pakistan needed."

Pakistan coach Bob Woolmer, who objected to Akhtar's lengthy bowling run-up, criticised Akhtar after the Sydney Test saying he was a shadow of himself and everyone was disappointed with his commitment.

"Every fast bowler had injuries and so have I, mine are more because of the load of bowling, but I always try my best," Akhtar defends.

The mercurial pace bowler said he was also disappointed over what he saw as a character assassination campaign by the foreign media.

"I am hurt and this ugly campaign of fabricated pictures on the internet, they rub salt to my injury and I think it is character assassination."

Foreign television channels showed internet pictures of Akhtar with girls in a disco.

"One day a friend came to me in India and protested I did not invite him to my wedding. When I told him I am not married yet he showed me an internet photo showing me as a groom and a girl with me as my bride."

"Even personalities like President George Bush is shown in nasty pictures on the (internet) net but you can't believe all that."

"I am more hurt when my own people back that ugly campaign."

"All this is done because I am injured. I think this is aimed at putting me under pressure before the all important India tour."

Akhtar said he knew the task in next month's series against India would be more difficult.

"(India tour) is a difficult task because every Pakistani would like us

to win in India. I would regain full fitness and do my best to help my team do well in India."

Jaques on par with Simpson

AFP, Sydney

New South Wales batsman Phil Jaques earned his place in local cricket history here Saturday when he became the first player since former Test captain Bob Simpson in 1963-64 to score two double-centuries in a domestic season.

After batting throughout the opening day of the four-day Sheffield Shield competition against Queensland on Friday, Jaques played on during day two to record a thumping 240 not out in the match at Bankstown Oval.

Jaques' effort made him the second-highest run scorer in the Sheffield Shield this season with 708 -- just behind Michael Bevan's 765.

His marathon 583-minute effort guided his state to 466 for 7 (declared) in the top-of-the-table clash.

Altat replaces

FROM PAGE 13 resigned as the board's chief executive last year.

A five-member committee consisting of Altat, former Test wicketkeeper Imtiaz Ahmed, Naseem Ashraf, Mueen Afzal and Ali Reza, was also announced to assist the board.

Damen Martyn is also expected to rejoin the team after a short break while paceman Brett Lee looks set to keep his position on the traditionally bouncy WACA wicket.

TEAMS AUSTRALIA (from): Ricky Ponting (captain), Adam Gilchrist, Matthew Hayden, Damien Martyn, Andrew Symonds, Darren Lehmann, Michael Clarke, Brad Hogg, Brett Lee, Jason Gillespie, Glenn McGrath, Shane Watson, Simon Katich, Brad Haddin.

PAKISTAN (from): Inzamamul Haq (captain), Salman Butt, Kamran Akmal, Mohammad Hafeez, Shoaib Malik, Yousuf Youhana, Abdul Razzaq, Shahid Afridi, Azhar Mahmood, Navedul Hasan, Iftikhar Rao, Tauseef Umar, Yasir Hameed, Younis Khan, Mohammad Khalil.

She toughed

FROM PAGE 13 leaving the court for treatment when she trailed 4-1.

The former world number one returned to court and ground her way back before a pivotal fifth game in the second set.

Williams gamely held off six break points against her serve in that game before slamming a service winner to hold for 3-2 in what proved to be the turning point of the match.

"I kept thinking to myself 'I'm not losing this game. I don't care if my arm falls off, I'm not losing this game'. And I guess that's what happened," Williams said.

"I didn't want to lose that particular game because it would have given her a lot of momentum, and a lot of confidence."

Del Piero's last masterpiece?

Football

AFP, Rome

Alessandro Del Piero's artistic touch appears to have deserted him. The striker known in Italy as 'Il Pinturicchio' (the little artist) used to paint a beautiful picture, but not anymore.

Currently in his 12th year with the 'Old Lady', the 30-year-old is facing up to the reality of having to fight for his place in the starting lineup.

In 14 Serie A appearances this season, Del Piero -- who is 13 goals away from becoming the club's highest ever goalscorer -- has been substituted 12 times, while in the other two matches he has come off the bench in the second half.

To his credit he has scored six goals in those games, a handsome return for any forward, but while he used to add an explosion of colour to the duller of matches, his peripheral performances these days resemble a blank canvas.

Last Sunday, Juve coach Fabio Capello did the unthinkable. He left Del Piero on the bench for the entire 90 minutes of the club's 2-0 home victory against Brescia, which saw them extend their lead at the top of the table to five points.

With Swedish striker Zlatan Ibrahimovic such a nuisance around the penalty box and Frenchman David Trezeguet back from injury, Capello decided to hand Del Piero the tracksuit rather than give it to the veteran forward's younger peers.

So high is the esteem in which Del Piero is held in Turin that large sections of the Juve crowd turned on Capello for leaving their hero out.

Milan to retire Maldini's shirt

XINHUA, Rome

Italian football giants AC Milan will retire captain Paolo Maldini's number three shirt at the end of his career, club CEO Adriano Galliani said on Friday.

"Paolo Maldini represents the history of this club and there's no doubt that his shirt will be retired at the end of his career," said Galliani at the official presentation of a film celebrating Maldini's 20 years of top-flight soccer.

"But have no doubt it, we'll have to wait a number of years for that," added Galliani.

The Serie A club has already retired the number six of Franco Baresi, considered one of the best defenders of all time.

Maldini, 36, played his first international match at the age of 19 as a substitute against Yugoslavia in 1988. He overtook Dino Zoff's record of 113 caps in 2001 and made his last appearance in Italy's controversial exit from the 2002 World Cup at the hands of co-hosts South Korea.

In total he played 126 times for his country and took part in four World Cups.

ZZ still top!

XINHUA, Madrid

Real Madrid's mercurial French playmaker Zinedine Zidane made it clear he was not over yet and that he still has a future at 32, at the time he foresaw a good year in 2005 for his team.

"We're all professionals and it does not make sense to say one is over at 32. I am the oldest member of the team, but I am not over and want to continue enjoying soccer. I am convinced 2005 will be a very good year," he told Spanish media on Friday.

Zidane made reference to the polemic with his teammate Ronaldo, who got mad Sunday when replaced during the game.

"Anything this happens he gets angry and it is better like this. The bad thing would be for him not to react. Now Michael Owen is improving and playing the way he knows as he is getting used to his new club," he added.

Zidane said the principal goal was to hunt down Primera Liga leaders Barcelona, who have a seven-point advantage over them.

"We have to be close to Barcelona, although when I am in the pitch I think of nothing but playing," he said.

Del Piero's omission sparked a massive debate in Italy, but despite increasing speculation over the player's future, Juventus' general director Luciano Moggi insists he's going nowhere.

"If we received a big offer for Del Piero we would reject it," he said. But Antonio Cabrini, a member of the Italy team that won the 1982 World Cup in Spain, believes Del Piero could move abroad if he fails to

win back his place. "I can't see him playing for a provincial club. He's a player for a big team and I don't see him going to another big team in Italy -- he's got Juve in his blood," said Cabrini, a former Juventus defender.

"It would be better if he went abroad, either Spain, England, France or Germany. He'd do well there."

Cabrini insisted the hostility shown by the Juve crowd towards Capello last weekend was misplaced.

"I don't agree with those people who say Capello has been disrespectful towards Del Piero -- no player is guaranteed a place in the team," he said.

Del Piero's former Juventus teammate Moreno Torricelli agreed.

"I don't see him playing for another team in Italy -- he is Juventus," he said.

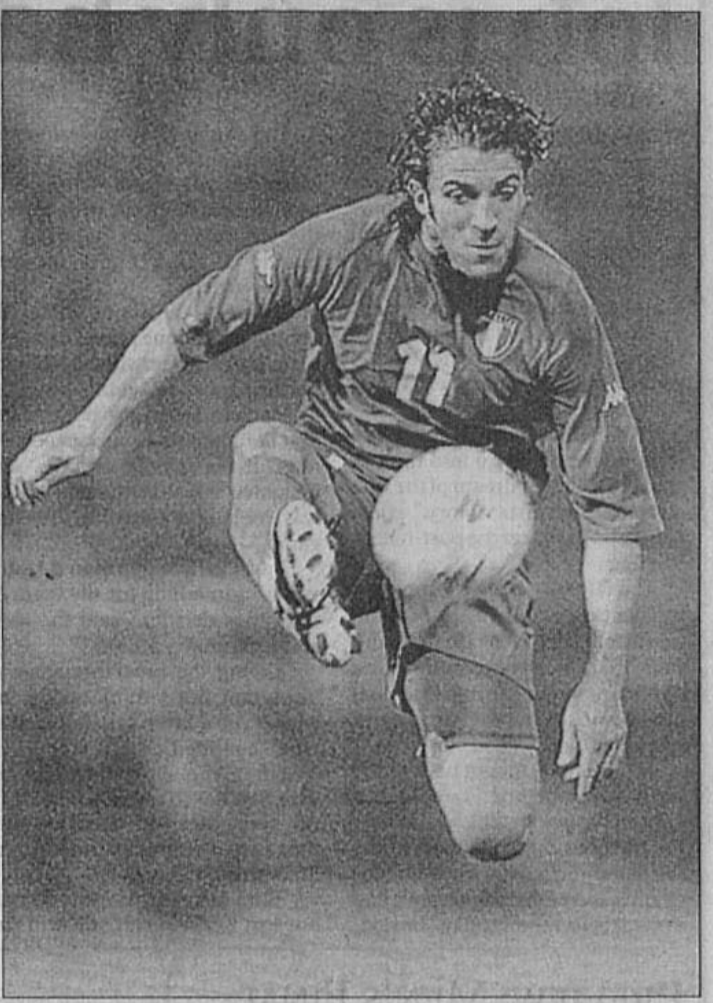
"It would be better if he went abroad. They would queue up to sign him because he's fantastic."

Gigi Riva, who inspired Cagliari to their only league title in the 1969/70 season and is Italy's all-time record goalscorer with 35 goals in 42 matches, offered Del Piero some sound advice.

"He needs to stay calm. He has shown that he's an excellent footballer, but life is full of highs and lows. Patience is a virtue," said the 60-year-old.

Since joining Juventus from Padova in 1993, Del Piero has won five league titles, the Champions League in 1996, the European Supercup and the Intercontinental Cup.

He has also scored 24 goals in 66 appearances for Italy.



ALESSANDRO DEL PIERO ...losing the golden touch

Mourinho sticks his neck out

Football

AFP, London

Jose Mourinho has admitted for the first time that his Chelsea side will be crowned champions of England this season and end a 50-year wait for the Londoners.

Chelsea, 10 points clear of nearest rivals and reigning champions Arsenal, are odds-on favourites to win the Premiership and now Mourinho agrees with the bookies.

The Blues need to win 11 of their remaining games to walk off with their first title since 1955.

"I think we will win the league, I think so. At this moment it is easier to win the league than the Champions League or even the FA Cup," said Mourinho who even expensively-assembled side are chasing four trophies this season.

"When you have a lead of 10 points, it is easier than the start of the season when everybody has the same points."

"It will still be difficult because we have to win 11 matches. But my players are very committed, it is like a crusade to win something."

"They don't need me to motivate them now. They have their own self-belief and are very, very strong. The mental side is always very important."

Mourinho maintains he is not bothered by predictions from Old Trafford and Highbury that Chelsea

will have a blip in their exceptional season.

Arsene Wenger has suggested Chelsea do not have the flair which his unbeaten Arsenal team demonstrated last season but Mourinho is adamant that his side have been the most exciting to watch this season.

"We are the most exciting team in the Premiership. Nobody plays better than us," said Mourinho.

"I think Arsenal had a beautiful start and Manchester United are having a very good period. In the last two months, they have been fantastic. But I think over the six months of competition, we are the best side. That's why we are where we are."

"I do not know what flair is in football. It is difficult for me to understand. For me, winning 5-4 is not flair, it is hockey, it is not football. For me flair is a team that defends fantastically well and a team that scores goals."

"If you look at the history of the season, at the start we were boring Chelsea, after that we could not score goals, then when Christmas arrived they said we would lose matches because Chelsea never win on Boxing Day."

"After that it was Chelsea have no chance of winning in the north and if we lose the Carling Cup semifinal the blip will start. When we lose a game, they say we will lose the next one."

"Everybody, week after week, are always speaking about us and trying to press us. I even read somewhere that

such an important person in your country like Sir Bobby Charlton was saying that we will feel the power of Manchester United and we will not cope without it."

"The comments do not disturb us. If they really believe we are not strong enough to win the competition, they would not speak about us. Nobody spoke about Everton when they almost leading because every was thinking that while they have a very good team, they cannot win the league."

"Everybody thinks they will be fourth. Nobody spoke about them. They speak about us every week because they feel we can do it."

Mourinho was charged on Friday with improper conduct by the Football Association for his comments in a post-match interview after the League Cup semifinal, first leg clash with Manchester United.

Mourinho, who has until February 14 to respond to the charge, made his comments in a Chelsea TV interview after the Stamford Bridge encounter on January 12.

In the meantime, the colourful Portuguese turns his attention to the FA Cup on Sunday with a fourth round tie against Birmingham at Stamford Bridge.

Eidur Gudjohnsen will replace Didier Drogba in attack and Carlo Cudicini will return in goal in place of Petr Cech. Glen Johnson will start at right-back in place of Paulo Ferreira.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down. Includes a solution time of 25 mins and a Cryptquip section.

Cryptquip puzzle grid with a solution key: X G F C L E F I K L S K, J X I X K J R J K Z X F C, R E L S F T Z S, X Z T K B B X G Z F L S K J K, R B R E R B L J K B F J L.

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Bangladesh Cricket Board TENDER NOTICE. Sealed tenders are hereby invited from the Contractors/Firms having up to date trade license and VAT Registration Certificate for the work of "Dismantling, Removing and Disposal of the existing Athletics tract of Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium, Dhaka".