



The semifinal between India and Sri Lanka in the 1996 cricket World Cup at Eden Gardens was the first to be awarded to a team by default, the crowd disturbance that forced match referee to award the match to





Franz Beckenbauer (German soccer legend)

"Argentina and Brazil are currently, and as they have been in the past, two of the strongest teams in the world. No doubt both are candidates to win the World Cup.



TEN Sports West Indies vs South Africa Fourth ODI

Live at 7:30 pm **STAR Sports**

ATP Hamburg Masters

Semifinal Live at 5:00 pm Primera Liga Real Madrid vs Sevilla Live at 11:55 pm

Zvonareva, Mauresmo reach semis

REUTERS, Rome Vera Zvonareva spearheaded

Russia's challenge at the Rome Masters by reaching the semifinals with a 7-5, 7-6 win over local favourite Francesca Schiavone on Friday. The sixth seed was one of four

Russians in the quarterfinals of the clavcourt event.

Later on Friday, top seed Maria Sharapova continues her pursuit of the world number one ranking when she takes on compatriot and number nine seed Elena Bovina, while Evgenia Linetskaya plays eighthseeded Swiss Patty Schnyder.

Zvonareva's reward for beating the last Italian in the draw will be a clash with defending champion Amelie Mauresmo, who brushed aside former winner Conchita Martinez 6-1, 6-2 on Friday.

"It's always good to earn a chance to turn things around," said SEE PAGE 13 COL 3

PCB boss wants to bury Shoaib issue

PTI, Islamabad

Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chairman Shaharyar Khan has sought to put a lid on the much-hyped issue of Shoaib Akhtar's fitness, saying the speedster should now concentrate on playing for Worcestershire and regain his

full match fitness "I don't see why this hue and cry over Shoaib not being considered for the West Indies tour. The situation before us is very simple; the South African trainer Grant Compton, our medical panel, the selectors and even the Board's Adhoc Committee felt he was not match fit and needed more time to get back to 100 per cent fitness,' Shaharyar said.

The PCB chief said the fast bowler would be considered for future assignments but before that

he needed to be completely fit. "It is not as if the Board has

SEE PAGE 13 COL 3

Tigers at ease

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Their opponents in the tour opener might have been rather average but Bangladesh captain Habibul Bashar had reasons to feel relieved after the Tigers passed their first test in England with credit.

"Honestly speaking, we were a little bit anxious before the first match because the conditions here were not suitable for us to make an instant impression. But the way the team reacted to the challenge was simply fantastic," said Bashar over telephone vesterday from the team bus which was taking them to their next destination and opponent Sussex from Cambridge. The Tigers take on the English county in their second three-day warm-up at Hove from May 15.

"Everyone in the top-order got runs which was particularly heartening," said Bashar who top-scored with a rapid 75 in the Tigers' second innings in the drawn fixture against the British Universities...

Coach Dav Whatmore was well

satisfied with his team's performance, saying: "They have approached these conditions better than Sri Lanka did when I was with them. There has not been too much complaining about the cold. We are very pleased with what we have got out of this game as the main objective is to get as much play in as possible in our three warm-ups."

Bashar was particularly delighted with the effort of fast bowler Shahadat Hossain Rajib who reportedly bowled with enough fire to surprise even the skipper

"Shahadat made us very happy. It was difficult for our bowlers to grip the ball in typical English cold but he had little trouble in overcoming that hurdle. He bowled an excellent line and length and generated some pretty good pace.'

Whatmore was also impressed with the 18-year old quick from Narayangani who took four wickets for 33 runs.

"It is healthy not to have preconceived conclusions on these guvs and what Shahadat has shown here is that he really wants to play [against England]. I had only seen

video footage of him playing for the A team before, but what he has done might mean he has leapfrogged everyone," said the 50-year old Australian.

When the Bangladeshis arrived in England last weekend, Shahadat was on the periphery but he outshone Mashrafee bin-Mortuza, the attack spearhead, and Tapash Baisya. And he might complement them in Bangladesh's attempts to embarrass an out-of-sorts England top six at Lords in the first Test that starts on May 26.

Apart from Shahadat, Bashar reserved special praise for longtime associate Javed Omar. The opener hit 167 in the first innings and followed that up with 39 in the

"I have rarely seen Javed in such a positive frame of mind. His innings eased the pressure on the rest of the

The Bangladesh team's think tank was now considering giving some other players in the squad a go against Sussex while resting a few of those who played at Fenner's.

"We are yet to finalise anything SEE PAGE 13 COL 2



PHOTO: BANGI ACRICKET COM KEEP SMILING! A Bangladeshi fan gets his moment with Tigers skipper Habibul Bashar (R) during the three-day tour opener against the

Div I soccer from May 15

SPORTS REPORTER

The Dhaka Senior Division Football League will kick off with a first division match between Victoria Sporting Club and Agrani Bank at the Bir Sheshthar Shaheed Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur on May 15.

The most coveted Premier League begins on May 20 at the Banga-bandhu National Stadium. The participating teams are Brothers Union, Sheikh Russel, Abahani Muktijoddha, Mohammedan, Arambagh, Wanderers, Youngmen's Club

Farashganj and Dipali Jubo Sangha. A total of eight teams -- Victoria Badda Jagarani, Dhanmondi, Rahmatganj, Mohakhali XI, BRTC, Wari and Agrani -- will take part in the double leg fray. Although the Premier League clubs have been allowed to field three foreign booters, the first division outfits will have to rely only on local collection.

Three top finishers will get next year's Premier League tickets while the bottom two will be relegated to the second division next season.

Meanwhile, three bottom-side Premier League sides will be relegated this season. The first division matches will be

open for all but Premier League matches will cost the fans Tk 20 each

India confirm Pakistan tour in January

Cricket

AFP, Karachi

Pakistan will host archrivals India for a series of three Tests and five oneday internationals in January 2006, cricket officials said Friday.

The tour will be the Indian team's second trip across the border since a ban on cricket matches between the South Asian neighbours, imposed in 2000 due to political tensions, was lifted two years ago.

"The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has confirmed India will be touring Pakistan from the first week of January next year," Pakistan Cricket Board chairman Shaharyar Khan told AFP.

Khan said he discussed the

itinerary during his meeting with Indian cricket officials on the sidelines of an Asian Cricket Council meeting in Kuala Lumpur this week.

The tour will start from January 2. After the Tests and one-day series the Indian team will stay for the ninth edition of the Asia Cup, which Pakistan host from February 14-26,

India and Pakistan, who have fought three wars since independence in 1947, often use their sporting ties and shared, all-consuming passion for cricket to help boost Last month President Parvez

Musharraf of Pakistan travelled to New Delhi to watch a one-day international, but the visit quickly built into talks with Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh.

India hosted Pakistan in March and April, drawing a Test series 1-1 and losing a one-day series 4-2.

Delhi lifted the bilateral sporting ban in October 2003 as a confidence-building measure, paving the way for India teams tour to Pakistan in early 2004, their first across the border for 15 years.

After the tour, India also cleared Pakistan to host the biennial Asia Cup in 2006. Pakistan had been unable to do so since its inception in 1984 because of the poor relations between the two countries.

Pakistan, India and Oman are placed in Group B of the Asia Cup, while defending champions Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and UAE are in

Inzy eyes the world

BBC ONLINE, Undated

Pakistan's Inzamamul Haq wants to captain the World XI in the ICC Super Series Test against Australia at the Sydney Cricket Ground in

British Universities at Fenner's in Cambridge

Inzamam, Michael Vaughan and Graeme Smith are the only current skippers in the provisional 30-man squad.

"A place in the World XI would be enough. If I get the captaincy it would be the icing on the cake," he "Much will depend on our West

Indies series. If I am able to win, I will be in line to lead the World XI surely."

Inzamam added: "It would be a great honour to lead a side with the best talent of all the world.

"We lacked a back-up bowler to Shoaib and Sami, who both had injury problems in Australia, so with a variety of bowlers like Muralitharan, Harmison, Flintoff, Ntini and Pathan, a captain has more

The squads for the Test and three Super Series one-day internationals will be reduced to 20 in July, with a final 13 to be announced the following month

The World side could be led by

No cricket for Piper for two weeks

AFP, London

Warwickshire wicketkeeper Keith Piper has been handed an interim suspension by the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) until May 26 after failing a drugs test.

At a disciplinary hearing in Manchester on Thursday, Piper, 35, pleaded guilty to a charge of failing a doping control test on April 14, 2005 when he provided a sample which contained a cannabis derivative. However, an ECB statement

said: "At Piper's request sentence was adjourned until May 26, 2005. In the interim Piper is suspended from participation in all cricket under the jurisdiction of the ECB. SEE PAGE 13 COL 1

WI-SA 4TH ODI TODAY

Ntini, Langeveldt fined

Cricket

Despite staring at a clean sweep of losses, West Indies have retained faith in their 13-man squad for the final two one-day matches against South Africa in Trinidad over the weekend.

The two teams play back-to-back matches on Saturday and Sunday to end the series.

South Africa sealed the series with their dramatic one-run victory in the third match in Barbados on Wednesday, and Joey Carew, West Indies' convenor of selectors, blamed the loss on "some bad cricket towards the end".

Carew said there was also some

"bad luck" when two runs were not credited to the score during the innings. "Nevertheless," he said, 'we go in with same squad and we are confident that we will win both games in Trinidad this weekend."

Meanwhile, South African fast bowlers Makhaya Ntini and Charl Langeveldt have been fined part of their match fees for breaching the International Cricket Council's Code of Conduct during the third one-

Both bowlers were found guilty of

'excessive appealing" by match referee Jeff Crowe in a hearing after the game finished at Bridgetown on Wednesday.

Langeveldt, hero of their Barbados triumph with a last-over hattrick, was fined one fifth of his match fee for his actions after the

celebrated the dismissal of Corey Collymore before the umpire had given the decision.

"Charl, albeit emotional in the dramatic moment, simply did not turn to appeal to the umpire for an lbw decision and pleaded guilty to the breach," said Crowe.

Ntini, who incurred a 25% fine on his match fee, was also found guilty of celebrating the dismissal before the umpire's verdict in the 11th over of the West Indian innings.

"At the ODI pre-series meeting team management was advised by the Playing Control Team that no tolerance would apply for these actions," added Crowe

"Makhaya was apologetic after the event and pleaded guilty to the **SEE PAGE 13 COL 8**

RACE FOR INDIA'S NEW COACH

Haynes in, Patil out

Cricket

AGENCIES. New Delh.

Former West Indies batsman Desmond Haynes will be among four candidates to be interviewed to succeed New Zealand's John Wright as India coach, the national cricket board said on Friday.

The 49-vear-old Havnes, former Australia captain Greg Chappell, his compatriot Tom Moody and ex-India batsman Mohinder Amarnath have been asked to appear before a sixmember interview panel in New Delhi on May 19, the board said in a statement

Former India batsman Sandeep Patil and ex-England off-spinner John Emburey were also approached by the Indian board but have declined, it said.

The 39-year-old Moody, currently cricket director with English county Worcestershire, is regarded as the front-runner.

Earlier, former Test star Sandeep Patil pulled out of the race because of prior commitments with Oman,

officials said.

"I have been informed by Patil that he is not available due to other commitments," Indian cricket board secretary Karunakaran Nair said.

Patil, 48, who coached rank outsiders Kenya to the World Cup semifinals in 2003, will lead unheralded Oman's campaign in the World Cup qualifiers in Ireland next

Patil had earlier served as India's coach in 1996 but that tenure lasted only six months. He later coached the India 'A' team before taking over

Patil, a swashbuckling batsman and useful medium-pacer, played 29 Tests and 45 one-dayers between 1980 and 1986

Patil, like Amarnath, had not applied for the Indian coach's job but both were included in the shortlist at the behest of a selection panel that includes three former captains, Sunil Gavaskar, Ravi Shastri and Srinivas Venkataraghvan.

New Zealander Wright, who took SEE PAGE 13 COL 8

Waugh keeps on batting for Sourav

PTI, Kolkata

While asserting that the six-ODI ban on Indian skipper Sourav Ganguly was not 'harsh', cricketing legend Steve Waugh today found fault with Ganguly's teammates for not alerting him about the slow over rate.

"I do not think action against Sourav is harsh, but the teammates also let him down by not making him alert on the slow over rate," Waugh told newspersons after a meeting with West Bengal Chief Minister Buddhadev Bhattacharjee at the state secretariat.

Waugh said as captain, Ganguly should be aware of his responsibilities and ensure that his teammates followed the rules of the game. "There is a rule book and every

body is aware of the rules of the game. As captain and leader of the team he has also the responsibility to ensure that his teammates abided by the rules."

For the third time in the last three days, Waugh rallied behind the beleaguered Ganguly, who has been going through a prolonged bad

patch with the bat. "Ganguly will make a comeback soon," he contended.

Russia's Maria Sharapova serves against France's Mary Pierce in the third round match of the Rome Masters

Glazer's MU bid sparks angry protests



Angry fans of Manchester United were threatening massive protests Friday after US tycoon Malcolm Glazer neared success in his bid for the celebrated English football team, a takeover supporters say is unwanted and will saddle the club with massive debt.

The 76-year-old multimillionaire, who owns NFL franchise the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, has been stalking the club for months, but looked set to complete the takeover imminently.

The breakthrough came Thursday, when Glazer's bankers announced he had bought a 28.7percent stake in the club from Irish racing millionaires J. P. McManus and John Magnier, formerly the

biggest single investors. This acquisition took Glazer's holding in Manchester United, the best-known and richest football club in the world, to 56.9 percent, triggering a takeover bid for the remaining

In a statement to the London Stock Exchange on Friday, Red Football Limited, Glazer's investment vehicle, said it now owned 69.55 percent of the club, just below the 75 percent required to let him take the publicly-listed company into private ownership. The 300 pence-per-share cash

offer values the English Premiership side at a massive 790.3 million pounds (1.16 billion euros, 1.47 billion dollars), but it has been greeted with concern by United's board of directors and provoked anger by the majority of supporters. Five fans were arrested

Thursday in angry scenes outside

the club's 68,000-seat Old Trafford ground, as they waved banners and burned season ticket renewal forms and effigies of Glazer.

Fan groups have pledged direct action against Glazer and his bankers JP Morgan, and say they will urge a boycott of the club in the event of a takeover to devalue the brand and reduce revenue. Supporters say Glazer has to

borrow so much money to finance the takeover that he will burden the currently financially liquid club with massive debts, meaning higher ticket prices and less spending on Glazer's final proposals are not

posed talked of 300 million pounds They also point out that Glazer has no apparent interest in the heritage of the club, which has won 15 English league titles and two

known, but an earlier bid he pro-

European Cups, claiming he will simply use the world-famous brand as a cash cow.

Supporters' umbrella group Shareholders United has labelled Glazer "a parasite" and promised "extreme measures" to thwart his "There will be protests tomor-

targets including the London Stock Exchange or the offices of JP Morgan. Another group, the Independent Manchester United Supporters' Association, threatened the formation of a breakaway club if Glazer

Such a move would mirror the SEE PAGE 13 COL 7

took over.

