

## Inzy intends to mend fences with Shoaib

CRICINFO, undated

Inzamamul Haq has said that he intends to talk at length with Shoaib Akhtar in South Africa during the Afro-Asian Cup.

Both players have been selected to represent the Asian XI in the three-match one-day series starting August 17.

Inzamam, named captain of the Asian side, said he planned to "sit down" and discuss team issues with Shoaib.

"I want to tell him what plans we have in mind for him, what are we expecting from him as our main strike bowler in the coming season," he said.

"I would also like to hear from him about his fitness and form and how motivated he is for the coming series."

Inzamam also made it clear that he had no personal problems with Shoaib. "There is no personal grudge between us. I just want him to perform as a frontline bowler for the team," he was quoted as saying by PTI.

"We have no doubt in our mind that when he puts his mind to it he is a match-winner for us."

Inzamam said he would also talk to the other Pakistani players who are representing the Asian XI, and let them know what he expected of them.

## Montreal Masters goes to Nadal

AFP, Montreal

Spanish sensation Rafael Nadal claimed the first hardcourt title of his career on Sunday, subduing US veteran Andre Agassi 6-3, 4-6, 6-2 to win the Montreal Masters Series crown.

The 19-year-old top seed, who was meeting the 35-year-old Agassi for the first time, captured his ATP Tour-best ninth title of the year, matching the record for tournament victories in a season by a teenager set by Mats Wilander in 1983.

Nadal's first eight titles of the year came on clay, including the French Open and Masters Series triumphs in Rome and Monte Carlo.

But with two weeks to go before the year's final Grand Slam, the hardcourt US Open, Nadal showed he can shine on cement as well.

"I knew I could play good on hard courts, because I've had some good scores this year," he said.

"But for me winning here is very, very nice. I have confidence now. I said before I came here my goal is to win any tournament on hardcourt this year, and I have that in the first, no?"

Nadal broke Agassi in the third and fifth games of the decisive set to improve his ATP-best record to 65-8 this year. He took home a winner's prize of \$400,000 dollars from the 2.45 million-dollar purse.

## Zimbabwe

FROM PAGE 12

Wishart c Astle b Franklin 30  
Taibu not out 76  
Streak c McCullum b Bond 0  
Dabengwa b Martin 17  
Mahwir c Astle b Vettori 42  
Cremer not out 7  
Mpofu c Marshall b Vettori 7  
Extras: (lb-4, nb-10) 14  
Total: (All out in 79 overs) 231  
Fall of wickets: 1-0, 2-3, 3-7, 4-65, 5-  
74, 6-74, 7-123, 8-211, 9-219

**Bowler** O M R W  
Bond 17 5 56 6  
Franklin 12 3 43 1  
Martin 13 4 42 1  
Styris 4 2 9 0  
Vettori 27 9 56 2  
Astle 6 2 26 0

**NEWWZEALAND:** First Innings  
J Marshall c Carlisle b Streak 10  
Vincent not out 20  
H Marshall run out (Mahwir) 13  
Extras: (nb-5) 5  
Total: (For 2 wkt in 9.3 overs) 48  
Fall of wickets: 1-34, 2-48

To Bat: Fleming, Astle, Styris, McCullum, Vettori, Franklin, Bond, Martin

**Bowler** O M R W  
Streak 5 1 27 1  
Mahwir 4.3 1 21 0

**Toss:** Zimbabwe.



THE DIEGOS: Former Argentine soccer star Diego Maradona (top) and his father Diego look on prior to the start of the Argentine First Division soccer match between Boca Juniors and Rosario Central at La Bombonera Stadium in Buenos Aires on Sunday.

## Sourav, Rahul get on well

### Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

After being re-appointed Indian captain, Sourav Ganguly has made it clear that there are no fissures in the side, and certainly no personality clash with Rahul Dravid, who had led the side while he served out a four-match suspension.

While admitting that the team's performance had declined over the past season, Ganguly categorically denied that different camps had sprung up within the squad.

"I want to make it very clear that there is no rift, no trouble, no problem between us (himself and Dravid)," he said, in an interview with the Mumbai Mirror.

"Rahul has also made that very clear. We know each other for a long time, we know how things work here. We've had a great working relationship, and we hope to continue our partnership."

Ganguly was also loathe to compare Dravid's style of leadership with his own. "Basically, every captain has his own way," he said.

"We have different styles but any two people will have different styles of leading a team. We may react differently to the same situation.

"I'm not going to comment on

which style is better because it is a very relative thing."

The debacle in the tri-nation tournament in Sri Lanka continued India's miserable run in one-day internationals since the team led by Ganguly lost the World Cup final to Australia in 2003.

Admitting that the slump was a matter of concern, Ganguly said: "Winning is a habit and we've got out of that habit. We just need to get a few wins under our belt, and then everything will get back in order.

"When we were losing last time in 2002, we got a few wins in the West Indies and that sparked off a great run, starting from England right to the Pakistan series last year. We just need to make something like that happen again."

There were plenty of frayed tempers on show in Sri Lanka, but Ganguly brusquely refuted suggestions that it had become every-man-for-himself.

"No, I don't believe that," he said, when asked whether it was true that the team had become faction-ridden. "But if anyone does this kind of stuff, they will themselves suffer. The most important thing is to have a winning team."

"If you're part of a side that's losing, whatever you do, all 16 members of the team will be shaky and unsteady. Scoring big runs or taking lots of wickets doesn't help

anyone's cause if the team is losing."

Having gone through a wretched run of form at the end of last season, Ganguly accepted that there would be pressure on him the next time he walked to the crease.

"I just got into a very bad patch during (the Pakistan) series. I was in bad form, and I'm not trying to make excuses, I didn't play well. If you don't play well, you will get under pressure."

However, he pooh-poohed notions that his perceived frailty against the short ball had been his undoing of late. "If I genuinely had a problem against short bowling, I wouldn't have scored runs in international cricket for the last nine years," he said.

"People would have figured me out long back. You can take a look at the stats, it's just a monkey that's riding on my back. Some people keep writing about it, that's all."

Ganguly, who scored a brilliant century at Brisbane in December 2003 after being greeted with headlines about "chin music" buttressed his argument by pointing out the case of his old adversary.

Steve Waugh always looked uncomfortable against the rising ball, but look at how well he did. It's not about how you look, it's about how many runs you score."

## Now Warne's best friend

### Cricket

AFP, Manchester

Mike Gatting, twelve years after 'Shane Warne bamboozled him with 'the ball of the century', once more found himself confounded at Old Trafford.

But rather than being deceived by the legendary leg-spinner, this time the former England captain was undone by Merlin, the bowling machine that has been helping Michael Vaughan's men in their Ashes preparations.

However, Merlin, who Warne has called his new best friend, failed to repeat the bowler's incredible 1993 delivery that turned almost at right angles to take Gatting's off-stump and the former Middlesex skipper was unable to show the world whether his technique now could have handled it.

To make matters worse, Merlin, in a duel in the Old Trafford nets, managed to dismiss Gatting with a much gentler ball, one that pitched on middle and leg and kissed his bat on the way to where first slip would have stood.

A gracious Gatting, was full of praise for the machine afterwards.

"It's very good provided the

feeder doesn't tell you a lie about whether it's a leg-break or a googly that's coming out because you can't see the ball out of a bowler's hand," Gatting said.

"As a coaching product, it can

teach you to pick up on the length, pick up on the line of the ball to play the shots you feel you can play. It gives you a bit of confidence and can help you learn to play the appropriate shot."

"And it is like playing a real bowler in the sense that sometimes they just don't turn."

Warne, whose dismissal of Gatting meant he took a wicket with his first ball in Ashes cricket, became the first man to claim 600 in Tests during the ongoing third Test at Old Trafford.

But in England's second innings the great man was rendered mortal with a haul of none for 74 in 25 overs.

Although Warne has dismissed the machine, England batsmen regard Merlin highly and its creator Henry Pryor says it can bowl every ball under the sun. "It's the wizard you see, and it is spelt the proper Welsh way," he said.

## Armstrong's no to politics

AP, Washington

Tour de France superstar Lance Armstrong dismissed reports that might enter politics by running for governor of Texas.

Shortly after winning his record seventh Tour last month, the cyclist told Outside magazine that he might consider a run for governor of his home state after 2006.

But he downplayed the statement as "more or less a joke" in an interview with ABC television.

"The biggest problem with politics or running for the governor ... here in

the US is that it would mimic exactly what I've done: a ton of stress and a ton of time away from my kids."

"Why would I want to go from pro-cycling, which is stressful and a lot of time away, straight into politics?"

Armstrong said that retirement had brought him a lot of freedom.

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## Real win tribute game

AP, Budapest

Ronaldo scored the go-ahead goal in the 72nd minute, helping Real Madrid defeat a Hungarian select side 3-1 on Sunday in a match to benefit ailing soccer legend Ferenc Puskas.

Zinedine Zidane converted a penalty kick and 75th-minute substitution Michael Owen scored for Real Madrid as well, while Krisztian Kenedi tallied for the Hungarians, also on a penalty.

A crowd of about 40,000 attended the match at Ferenc Puskas Stadion - named in 2003 after the former Hungarian and Real Madrid striker.

The 78-year-old Puskas has been hospitalized for years with a series of ailments. Hungarian soccer officials said the amount to be donated to Puskas would be revealed next week.

Real Madrid's opponents, dubbed the "Ferenc Puskas Selection," were coached by former German international Lothar Matthaeus, manager of Hungary's national squad.

Puskas led Hungary to the 1952 Olympic title in Helsinki and scored 84 goals in 85 international appearances for Hungary. He also played four times for Spain.

Zidane defected to Spain after the 1956 Hungarian revolution, teaming up with Alfredo Di Stefano at Real Madrid. Nicknamed Pancho, he was the Spanish league's top scorer four times and won three European Cup titles and five league titles between 1958-67.

Admittedly, he pooh-poohed notions that his perceived frailty against the short ball had been his undoing of late. "If I genuinely had a problem against short bowling, I wouldn't have scored runs in international cricket for the last nine years," he said.

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Jerome, who scored a brilliant century at Brisbane in December 2003 after being greeted with headlines about "chin music" buttressed his argument by pointing out the case of his old adversary.

Steve Waugh always looked uncomfortable against the rising ball, but look at how well he did. It's not about how you look, it's about how many runs you score."

Jerome was sent off by referee Steve Bennett in the 32nd minute at Highbury for a foul on midfielder Gilberto Silva, although television replays showed that the England international had only caught the Brazilian as his trailing leg followed through.

"He has requested that the Football Association downgrade the dismissal to a yellow card and this has been confirmed by the FA."

Jerome, 22, would have faced a three-match ban had his sending off stood, keeping him out of the trip to Bolton next Wednesday and the home games against Manchester United and Fulham.

With his future on Tyneside uncertain amid speculation that he could leave before the transfer window closes at the end of this month, his 32 minutes at Highbury could have been his last in a black and white shirt.

**Crespo last**

FROM PAGE 12

should have done better with. "If we give everything we've got like that every week we'll be okay. If we do it week in, week out, we will surprise a few people."

"The only negative is the result - everything else is positive. We pushed them all the way and arguably had the better chances."

Shaun Wright-Phillips, who joined Chelsea from Manchester City in a 23-million-pound deal last month, had to be content with a place on the