

Lloyd hails Caribbean cash injection

Cricket

BBC ONLINE

Former West Indies captain Clive Lloyd has described a businessman's plan to invest 28 million dollars in Caribbean cricket as "wonderful news" for the region.

Texan billionaire Allen Stanford plans to launch an annual Twenty20 tournament involving 17 Caribbean nations and a professional Super League.

"It augurs well for the future of our cricket," said Lloyd.

"It's going to be well organised and our players have a lot to gain from it. I hope it can turn our cricket around."

Lloyd is the most successful West Indies captain of all time, having led them to victory in 36 Test matches and the 1975 and 1979 World Cup finals.

He later had a spell as team manager but was unable to arrest a decline in standards, which has seen the team sink to eighth in the current

International Cricket Council ratings.

"The time has come for us to bite the bullet and try and get to those halcyon days again," said Lloyd.

The new concept will differ from traditional West Indies cricket in that



CLIVE LLOYD

there will be no composite sides like the Leeward and Windward Islands, with each country fielding its own team.

Lloyd believes new talent will be unearthed as a result of Stanford's plans.

"This is a very good incentive. I feel that in order for us to get back to the top of the ladder, we must improve our infrastructure, improve our domestic cricket, and once we have a good structure, we'll have better Test players.

"You can't say we'll do this, and do that and not have a plan. You must have a plan if you want to go forward," he said.

Stanford's plan is the biggest single investment for cricket in the region, beating the current deal with West Indies team sponsors Digicel.

But Lloyd believes West Indies cricket must do more to attract further investment from other sources.

"Nothing will progress these days without money. Money is the name of the game. We must go out and sell our cricket to all these corporate bodies," he commented.

Helguera doesn't find it funny

AP, Madrid

Welcome to the Real Madrid zoo. Several Brazilian players on the traditional Spanish soccer power have taken to celebrating goals by imitating animals a cockroach, frog and horse, in particular and the displays aren't going over too well with teammates and opponents.

Ronaldo, Roberto Carlos and Julio Baptista have scored six of Madrid's seven goals in recent league victories over Alaves and Mallorca and, together with Robinho, have put on the shows.

"They're not doing it out of spite, they're doing it to celebrate, but if I played in the other team and they scored four goals against me I'd think they were making fun of me," Madrid teammate Ivan Helguera told the news agency Efe.

The Spanish defender said he had given Roberto Carlos a kick after one of the animal impressions during the Mallorca game last Sunday.

"I think goals should be celebrated in a group and by the team. I prefer a group celebration because it's not just Roberto or Ronaldo who win but the whole team," Helguera said.

The Brazilians' fad has received a mixed reaction. Some have treated it as harmless while others have said it is divisive.

Alaves president Dmitry Piterman called Ronaldo, Robinho and Roberto Carlos "clowns" and "spoilt kids" for wiggling their arms and legs while lying on their backs like a cockroach during Madrid's 3-0 win on Sept. 25.

Spain's Anti-Violence Commission requested the country's soccer federation to open a disciplinary charge against Piterman for his outburst.

Playing dad comes first

AFP, Manchester

England captain David Beckham missed the start of preparations for Saturday's World Cup qualifier with Austria to be with one of his sons who is undergoing hospital tests.

The Real Madrid star was given permission by England coach Sven-Goran Eriksson to remain in Spain while his team-mates trained at Carrington in Manchester on Tuesday.

Beckham and his ex-pop star wife Victoria took their three-year-old son Romeo to hospital on Saturday suffering from convulsions.

In August Romeo was rushed to a British hospital in similar circumstances.

Beckham, who has three sons - Brooklyn, Romeo and Cruz - will instead join up with the squad Wednesday afternoon.

Puerta in dope scandal

AFP, Paris

French Open finalist Mariano Puerta of Argentina tested positive for a stimulant at Roland Garros in June, sports daily L'Equipe reported Wednesday.

The player could face a life ban as he had already been banned for nine months for testing positive for an anabolic steroid in 2003.

He tested positive for Etilefrine, used for hypotension, at Roland Garros.

Puerta, who lost the Roland Garros final to Spain's Rafael Nadal, has climbed into the top 10 after starting the year at 400 when he was forced to play challenge tournaments following his previous doping offence.

L'Equipe said the player will not be identified by the men's ruling body, ATP, until he has appeared before a doping panel.

Puerta, 27, is the fifth Argentine player to have tested positive for drugs in five years.

Guillermo Canas was suspended two years this year, Martin Rodriguez was docked ATP points and his winnings in 2003, Guillermo Coria was suspended seven months in 2001 and Juan Ignacio Chela suspended three months in 2000.

In Paris in June, Puerta said his comeback from the tennis wilderness was due to hard work and sacrifice.

The left-hander had tested positive for clenbuterol, a favorite drug of the former East German athletes in the 1980s, at a tournament in Vina del Mar in 2003.

Inzamam

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was not in favour of using technology for some decisions. He was of the view that either the technology should be used fully or not at all.

Regarding the Super Series, he pointed out that the World XI should win the series.

"Though Australia lost the Ashes but no one should underestimate them as they are still a force to reckon with."

-- Internet source

Decision day in Africa

AFP, Johannesburg



Emmanuel Adebayor does not feature in the who's who of international football. Nor does Fabrice Maico.

But come next June in Germany, strikers Adebayor of Togo and Maico of Angola could be challenging the greats of the game like Brazilian Ronaldinho for possession at the World Cup.

This Saturday evening the identity of the five African qualifiers for the quadrennial showcase will be known and minnows Togo and Angola are among 11 challengers.

A draw in Congo and Togo top Group 1. A win in Rwanda and Angola top Group 4. And should those results come to pass, 2002 World Cup giantkillers Senegal and mighty Nigeria will miss out on the greatest soccer show.

Ghana (Group 2), Cameroon (Group 3) and Tunisia (Group 5) are poised to claim the other places after a 13-match programme sure to provide drama in abundance.

Democratic Republic of Congo, Ivory Coast, Zimbabwe and Morocco complete the list of contenders as a two-year, 190-match qualifying programme draws to an intriguing climax.

Senegal and Mali were expected to fight for Group 1 honours, but starless Togo edged in front early on and

a team coached by former Nigeria defensive stalwart Stephen Keshi has withstood every attempt to unseat it.

Adebayor is the 10-goal leading scorer in the qualifiers, plays for French club Monaco, and his gangling frame makes him the Peter Crouch of African football.

There will be no shortage of English Premiership participants in the Senegal line-up, including twice African Footballer of the Year El-Hadjji Diouf, but their salvation lies only in a home win over Mali and defeat for Togo.

Ghana have been African champions a record-equalling four times, but former giants like Abedi 'Pele' Ayew and Tony Yeboah have never been able to take the 'Black Stars' to the World Cup.

Along came Serb coach Ratimir Djukovic to change all that. He brings nonsense from no one. Samuel Kuffour will vouch for that having tackled authority and come off a dismal second best.

Once the cultured defensive kingpin of Ghana, Italy-based Kuffour is now surplus to requirements despite apologising for making false claims over his absence from the squad.

Ghana need a point away to Cape Verde Islands to be sure of a ticket to Germany, while the slender hopes of DR Congo rest on a handsome win at struggling South Africa and substan-

tial defeat for Ghana.

Cameroon are on the verge of an African record fifth consecutive World Cup appearance. They lead long-time pacesetter Ivory Coast by a point and finish with a home fixture against Egypt while stubborn Sudan host the Ivorians.

At one stage Cameroon were five points behind Ivory Coast, but a heroic comeback was crowned by a 3-2 triumph in Abidjan last month courtesy of an Achille Webo hat-trick.

These were the Indomitable Lions of old. Green-clad warriors with hunger in their eyes and fire in their hearts. Given the poor record of Egypt south of the Sahara there seems little likelihood of them stopping Cameroon.

The fact that Angola are so close to Germany is the stuff of fairytales given that they began their campaign with a 3-1 loss in Chad and needed the away-goal rule to eliminate one of the weakest national teams in Africa.

Qatar-based striker Maico is a long serving member of a squad that proved its worth by beating Nigeria in Luanda and drawing in Abuja to establish a head-to-head advantage.

But humble coach Luis Oliveira Goncalves will not take bottom-of-the-table Rwanda for granted in Kigali. Angola have not won away in five outings and a lack of experience could trigger panic should they fall behind.

Nigeria can squeeze through if Angola slip up while Zimbabwe would pip both if they triumph by four goals in Abuja and Rwanda collect maximum points. Football may be a strange game, but surely not that strange.

Only in Group 5 where Tunisia host Morocco do the challengers come face to face. This is a repeat of the 2004 African Nations Cup final won 2-1 by the Tunisian Carthage Eagles.

And the odds favour the Roger Lemerre-coached Eagles as a draw will suffice while Morocco must win to atone for a shock failure to make it to the previous World Cup.

Studios Frenchman Lemerre has already carved a niche in football folklore by becoming the first man to coach continental champions in Europe and Africa having guided Les Bleus to glory in the Netherlands five years ago.

Tunisia are mentally and physically more combative under him. Happy to soak up pressure and counterattack with speed and stealth. And they face Morocco with a full strength squad.

Heartbreak awaits Morocco coach Badou Zaki, the last goalkeeper to be voted African Footballer of the Year. His Atlas Lions could finish the qualifiers as the only unbeaten country yet fail to qualify for the World Cup.

WI pay dispute over

Full-strength team for Aus tour

Cricket

CRICINFO

West Indies will be at full-strength for next month's tour to Australia after their board and the players settled a long-standing contracts dispute.

The West Indies Cricket Board (WICB) and the West Indies Players Association (WIPA) have agreed that players selected for the upcoming tour to Australia will sign the match/tour contract subject to the negotiations of Clause 5 which, when agreed, will be placed immediately into the contract.

This statement was part of a joint media release issued on Tuesday, more than 11 months since the impasse between the two parties began. Last November, another West Indies tour of Australia -- for the VB

Series -- was nearly derailed after players selected for a pre-tour camp, on the advice of WIPA, refused to sign their match/tour contracts.

In July, however, the West Indies tour of Sri Lanka was severely disrupted by the ongoing dispute, when a second-string team played in the Tests and tri-nation one-day series.

However, the joint statement gave the undertaking that the two parties had also agreed that the International Cricket Council (ICC) and the Federation of International Cricketers' Associations (FICA) will be asked to negotiate Clause 5 of the match/tour contract with a view to making a joint recommendation within ten days of commencing the negotiations. This joint recommendation will be binding on the parties.

If there is no agreement after ten days, it is agreed that ICC and FICA will

recommend an independent arbitrator. Should that exercise not be completed prior to the tour, it would continue and any financial benefits which may be agreed upon after the mediators' recommendation would be paid with effect from the date of the signing of the contract.

The statement ended by saying that the two parties also agreed that matters which remain to be settled with respect to all other outstanding issues, including the proposed retainer contracts, would be referred to representatives of their organisations for finalisation within an agreed time-frame.

This agreement followed discussions between Ken Gordon, president of the WICB, and Dinanath Ramnarine, the president and chief executive officer of WIPA, last week-end.

Patel takes over Kiwi U-19s

BBC ONLINE

Former Worcestershire all-rounder Dipak Patel has been appointed coach of the New Zealand under-19 team.

Patel spent a decade on the staff at New Road before emigrating to New Zealand after the 1986 county season.

He went on to play 37 Tests and 75 one-day internationals for his adopted country before retiring eight years ago and moving into coaching.

The 46-year-old will be in charge of the Kiwi youngsters until the end of the U-19 World Cup next February.

"We are very pleased to be able to appoint Dipak to this position," said New Zealand Cricket High Performance Centre boss Gary Stead.

Injured Jones

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game, but Graveney hopes that will actually aid his recovery not hinder it.

He also referred to Andrew Flintoff's speedy recovery from a similar injury earlier this year.

"He (Jones) fought his way back from a serious injury in Australia so let's hope he recovers as Freddie (Flintoff) did with a similar injury," he told Sky Sports News.

'We're hurting

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"This is the first chance we've had to express ourselves in any shape or form since returning from England.

"We've all worn a bit and copped a bit since we've come back about the way the team performed in England, which some was fair and some was a little unfair.

"This has been the first chance we've had to show the cricket-loving public of the world just how good a cricket team we are.

"We've come up against a very good team tonight and we've outplayed them comprehensively. I'm very proud about the way the guys have approached this game, but we've set a benchmark that we have to keep up to all the time."

Saqlain unlikely

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that series, including 8 for 164 in the first innings at Lahore.

"Pakistan will have some home advantage but I really don't know how much it will affect the outcome of the series. The last time England came in 2000, only Graham Thorpe could play spin well now they have several good players of spin."

Pakistan has been toying with the idea of recalling Mushtaq Ahmed in a bid to boost their spinning options and provide Danish Kaneria with some support.

Court allows BCCI to open TV bids

Cricket

CRICINFO

The Delhi High Court has allowed the Board for Cricket in India (BCCI) to open technical bids to grant telecast rights in India for the next four years after Zee Telefilms, one of the bidders, said it had no objection to it.

A division bench, comprising Justice BA Khan and MB Lokur, allowed the board to open technical bids to decide the eligibility of the bidders, including Zee Telefilms, and asked the board not to disclose the outcome. The BCCI has been asked to inform the outcome to the court on October 19, when the matters comes up for further hearing.

On behalf of the BCCI, senior counsel Soli Sorabji and AM Singhvi requested the bench to allow opening of the bids, saying that there was not much time left to decide the issue

ahead of the home series against Sri Lanka, scheduled to begin on October 25. Zee had moved the court on August 22 seeking direction to the BCCI to consider it for the bid of telecasting matches between October 2005 and September 2009.

It also alleged that the tender favoured only ESPN Star Sports. The BCCI had asked bids from channels having experience in telecasting live matches in the last three years, as opposed to the two-year qualification it has asked for in the past. The last date for submission of the bids was September 26.

However, the BCCI maintained that it only wanted bids from channels which had a three-year experience as a direct original licensee from any event owner of telecasting live international matches in each of the three years -- 2002, 2003 and 2004 -- to bid for the telecast rights.

Normal service

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and Muralitharan had triggered a middle-order batting collapse.

Australia got off to a rollicking 80-run opening partnership between Adam Gilchrist (45) and Katich (58), but ran out of steam.

Muralitharan captured 2-41 off 10 overs and Vettori claimed 4-33 off 10 overs to have Australia struggling to reach a competitive 250-run target.

The hosts had slumped to 154 for 5 before Andrew Symonds (36) and Michael Hussey (32) steadied the ship with 52 runs for the sixth wicket.

Big hitting from Lee, with an unbeaten 26 off 17 balls, helped add 24 runs in the last two overs with Flintoff going for 12 runs in his last over and finishing wicket-less for 66 off nine overs.

SCOREBOARD
Scoreboard of the ICC Super Series first ODI match between Australia and ICC World XI at the Docklands Stadium in Melbourne on Wednesday.

AUSTRALIA		ICC World XI	
Gilchrist	b	Kallis	45
Katich	c & b Muralitharan	58	
Ponting	c Lara b Pollock	23	
Martyn	c Vettori	19	
Muralitharan	0		
Symonds	c Flintoff	36	
Vettori	36		
Clarke	c & b Vettori	6	
Hussey	c Pietersen	32	
Vettori	8		
Watson	c Lara b Vettori	8	
Lee	not out	26	
Bracken	not out	2	
Extras:	(b-2, lb-6, w-6, nb-5)	19	
Total:	(For eight wkts in 50 overs)	255	
Fall of wickets:	1-80, 2-128, 3-128, 4-142, 5-154, 6-206, 7-223, 8-231.		
Bowler	O	M	
	38	1	

R	W
Akhtar	9
Pollock	8
32	1
Flintoff	9
66	0
Kallis	4
26	1
Muralitharan	10
41	2
Vettori	10
33	4

WORLD XI		O	M
Schwag	c Hussey b McGrath	6	
Sanga	c Ponting b Watson	64	
Kallis	b McGrath	8	
Lara	c Symonds b Bracken	0	
Dravid	c Ponting b Lee	4	
Pietersen	b b Watson	2	
Flintoff	c McGrath b Watson	38	
Afri	b b Symonds	2	
Pollock	run out (Watson)	5	
Vettori	c Ponting b Lee	15	
Akhtar	not out	1	
Extras:	(lb-1, w-6, nb-1)	8	
Total:	(All out in 41.3 overs)	162	
Fall of wickets:	1-18, 2-45, 3-50, 4-75, 5-82, 6-101, 7-104, 8-118, 9-150.		
(Afri	came on as a super sub for Muralitharan)		
Bowler	O	M	
Lee	7.3	2	
31	2		
McGrath	7	1	
13	2		
Bracken	8	0	
36	1		
Watson	10	0	
43	3		
Symonds	9	0	
38	1		

What's eating 'The Emperor'?

Football

REUTERS, Rome

Hailed 12 months ago as the finest centre forward in the world, Inter Milan striker Adriano is gaining a reputation as a Jekyll and Hyde performer after struggling to hit the target in Serie A.

The 23-year-old has had a mixed year in 2005, suffering an alarming dip in form for his club while consistently producing his best for Brazil.

He seemed to have come of age last year when he led his country to a Copa America triumph in July and made a dream start to the Italian season, scoring 14 times in 15 games.

Since January, however, "The Emperor" has been anything but imperious in Serie A, scoring on just three of 20 appearances for a total of five goals, one of which was a penalty.

He showed no sign of shaking off the drought on Sunday, when he failed to muster a shot on goal in a 2-0 loss to Juventus, a result that raised serious doubts about Inter's bid to win their first Serie A title since 1989.

The atmosphere was tense after the match, when Adriano publicly criticised the tactics of his coach Roberto



ADRIANO

Mancini.

"Mancini had a go at (strike partner Obafemi) Martins and I because we didn't keep possession enough," he told Italy's Sky Sport.

"That's fine, but he must understand that whenever we received the ball there was no-one to pass to. We were too isolated up front."

Although he has no lack of suitors, few expect the Brazilian to leave Inter in the near future.

Last week he extended his contract to 2010 and has always insisted he is happy at the club.

His prolonged form slump, however, is becoming the cause of debate in Italy, particularly because he has continued to hit the target regularly for Brazil.

Last month he struck a hat-trick in a 5-0 drubbing of Chile that guaranteed the world champions a place in next year's World Cup finals.

From Inter's perspective, Brazil's final two qualifiers against Bolivia and Venezuela have not arrived a moment too soon.

The Serie A club will hope they can act as a morale-booster for their troubled striker before resuming their domestic campaign against Livorno