

Australia retain Indira Gold Cup hockey

PTI, New Delhi.

India eves succumbed to pressure in the tie breaker as defending champions Australia ran away with the title for second time on the trot defeating hosts India 5-3 in the Indira Gandhi Gold Cup Women's Hockey Tournament here on Saturday.

With both teams tied at 2-2 at the hooter and failing to break the deadlock through a golden goal in the extra time, the match had to be decided in a tie-breaker where Australia slammed three penalty strokes against India's one.

For Australia captain Nikki Hudson, who also scored in the regulation time, Arroll Nicole and Sanders Rebecca netted goals to get past Indian goalkeeper Helen Mary in the penalty shoot-out.

Subhadra Pradhan was the lone scorer for India in the tie-breaker.

Australian custodian Imison Rachel denied Jasjeet Kaur and Subhadra Pradhan the opportunity to score making brilliant saves while Mamta Kharab's crucial shot, when India's fate was hanging in balance at 2-1, went wide.

Rebecca made no mistake in Australia's fifth attempt in the tie-breaker to romp home.

Earlier, Indian eves started with promise as Mamta scored in the eight minute while Jasjeet Kaur Handa slammed another in the 18th minute to consolidate the lead to a comfortable 2-0 and maintained it till the break.

But the eves from down under fought their way back into the game from 0-2 down by converting two penalty corners through Taylor Sarah and Nikki Hudson to keep their hopes alive for the title.

Gilchrist unaware of record ton

AFP, Melbourne

Adam Gilchrist was blissfully unaware he had scored the fastest century by an Australian in a one-day cricket international as he powered Australia to victory over the World XI here.

Gilchrist claimed his 12th one-day century in 73 balls in the officially-sanctioned ODI, cracking eight fours and four sixes to eclipse the mark of 78 balls that he had shared with former captain Allan Border.

His blazing 103 motored the Australians to a match-winning 328 for four. The world team could only muster 273 in reply to lose the match by 55 runs and the Super Series with a game to play on Sunday.

The naturally-gifted left-hander was in irresistible touch as he plundered the world bowling before he was bowled by Indian off-spinner Virender Sehwag.

"I didn't feel like I got off to a flyer at the start, I knew through the middle (of the innings) that the tempo was going really well, but it's all about the start we get for the team," Gilchrist said at the post-match press conference.

"And fortunately Kato (Simon Katich) and I managed to do a good job there (opening partnership) and get a couple of good launching pads in the two games and the guys then came in today and really cashed in on that."

Gilchrist had a forgettable Ashes series against England, scoring just 181 runs at 22.62 with a highest score of 49, but he said that was all in the past.

"That's just wasting your time and mental energy thinking about that, but I was certainly relieved to be getting runs today," he said.

"Like everyone who came back from England, I had a bit to think about and some hard work, I didn't have to necessarily change major things, but I just had to clear my head."

"I had to get in some good hard practice and I think that's what this team did and we addressed it early in net sessions and training sessions here have been great."

"If you work hard enough long enough it turns around. We all thought we were working very hard in England at various times and trying to get through it."

"But it all probably shows just how well England bowled in England."

"That bowling lineup there on paper is as good as any bowling lineup in the world and it just shows that if you don't put it in the right areas good batsmen are going to capitalise and it just shows how consistently well England bowled in England."

World's last

FROM PAGE 12
MEK Hussey, SR Watson, CL White, B Lee, GD McGrath, NW Bracken, S Clark, JR Hopes.
ICC WORLD XI (from): SM Pollock (captain, South Africa), V Sehwag (India), CH Gayle (West Indies), KC Sangakkara (Sri Lanka), JH Kallis (South Africa), BC Lara (West Indies), KP Pietersen (England), A Flintoff (England), R Dravid (India), Shahid Afridi (Pakistan), DL Vettori (New Zealand), Shoaib Akhtar (Pakistan), M Muralitharan (Sri Lanka), M Ntini (South Africa).

Umpires: DB Hair (Australia) & Aleem Dar (Pakistan). Third umpire: SJA Taufel (Australia). Match referee: RS Madugalle (Sri Lanka)

Becks steps down as penalty-taker

Vandals damage Eriksson's home

AFP/REUTERS, London



Sven-Goran Eriksson has praised the decision of England captain David Beckham to step down as penalty-taker in an attempt to boost their World Cup qualification hopes.

Skipper Beckham, who has failed to convert any of his last three spot-kicks for his country, is willing to hand over the duties to Frank Lampard although this has still to be confirmed.

The Real Madrid star approached Eriksson several months ago about the possibility of standing aside after failing from 12 yards against Turkey, in 2003, and France and host nation Portugal during Euro 2004 -- the latter in the quarterfinal shoot-out.

Beckham is conscious of not having taken a penalty for 16 months since that miss on an emotional night in Lisbon and would be happy for Lampard to be given the responsibility.

Eriksson, whose side face Austria at Old Trafford on Saturday, admitted: "The topic of penalties is something that David Beckham took up with me two or three months ago."

"He said, 'Do you think I should still take the penalties or is it better than Frank takes them?' The reason for that is that he has not taken one since Euro 2004 against Portugal."

"It was very sensible of David to come to me and say, 'Maybe the penalties should go to Frank.' He was convinced that Frank should take them and, if we had had a penalty there and then, Frank would have taken it."

"I don't know if David and Frank have talked about it. It is not something we have discussed so far during this meet-up but I am going to discuss it with the players before we go out today."

Meanwhile, Eriksson says that vandals who smashed a front window at his London home this week were not disaffected fans.

The vandals threw an object, reportedly a brick, through the window near Regent's Park last Monday. Police said on Friday they had made no arrests.

The Swede has been in the eye of a media storm since last month's humiliating 1-0 defeat by Northern Ireland in a World Cup qualifier and a 4-1 friendly rout by Denmark in August.

"It's correct that I had some damage to my house, but that's the third time, I think," Eriksson told reporters.

"It wasn't three times after Northern Ireland -- but once after it. The other two were much before that, unfortunately, and I don't think it has anything to do with England fans, absolutely not."

Eriksson, who is preparing his team for two crucial World Cup qualifiers against Austria and Poland in Manchester, was not in the house at

the time.

Eriksson said he had found England fans very supportive during his visit to Premier League club matches.

"The reaction of the England fans when I'm travelling around the country is 'Come on' and, I don't know if I should say this or not - 'Don't listen to the press.'"



DAVID BECKHAM

It's the Brazil team, claims Parreira

REUTERS, Teresopolis (Brazil)



Brazil coach Carlos Alberto Parreira has rejected suggestions he is taking a reserve team to Sunday's World Cup qualifier in Bolivia.

The world champions are already guaranteed a place in next year's finals and Parreira has decided to rest eight regulars, including Ronaldinho, Ronaldo, Roberto Carlos and Kaka, for the game in La Paz which is 3,600 metres above sea level.

However, the team still contains several players who would almost certainly walk into any other international side.

"For you this is the reserve team

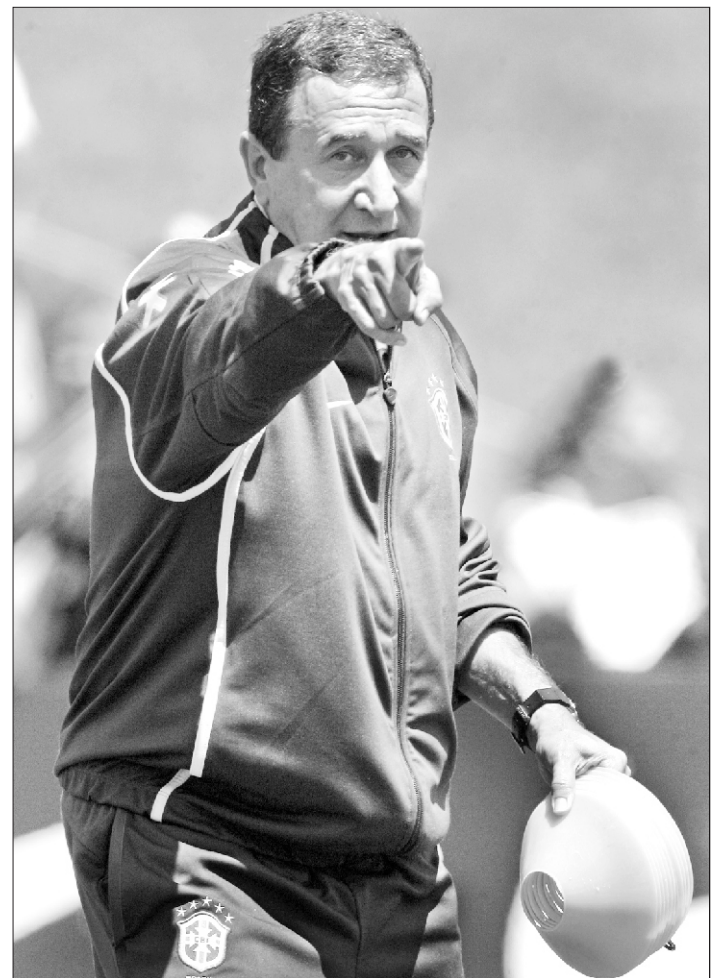
but for us it's the Brazil national team," Parreira told reporters on Friday.

"Here, we have 22 first-team players. You can't call Gilberto Silva a reserve, Alex a reserve, Roque Junior a reserve, Adriano and Robinho reserves."

"This is still the Brazil team. The only difference is that it has not been regularly represented by these players."

Brazil have lost their last two World Cup qualifiers in La Paz, 2-0 in 1993 and 3-1 in 2001, although they beat Bolivia 3-1 in the 1997 Copa America final at the same venue.

"This is a risky game for us but technically we've got a very good side and we want to get the six points from our last two games," said Parreira.



ALBERTO PARREIRA

Wenger denies rift with Henry

AFP, London

Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger says there is no rift between him and star French striker Thierry Henry.

Henry has decided to delay talks on a new deal to keep him at the Gunners preferring to wait until the end of the season, when he will have just 12 months to run on his current deal.

The delay has made Arsenal fans nervous with Spanish giants Barcelona reportedly interested in taking Henry to the Nou Camp - they could do so at a cut price if the player does not agree a new contract.

"You have to respect his view," said Wenger.

"Our desire is to talk about it earlier but you can only talk about it when both parties are ready. We will do it when he is ready."

"We are always ready and you have to respect everybody's mind."

Henry has missed six games -- most recently last weekend's 1-0 victory over Birmingham - but hopes to return against West Brom next weekend.

Wenger also expects to be without England left-back Ashley Cole for up to six weeks after it was confirmed he had suffered a stress fracture of his foot.

"We suspected something and when he was X-rayed with the national team it showed a stress fracture," Wenger told Arsenal TV.

"It's a big blow because we have stability at the back and Ashley is a top-quality player so ideally you want him to be there because we have some big games coming up."

"I think we will be without him for four to six weeks."

Special one branded

AFP, London

Jose Mourinho calls himself special while his critics call him a big head but whatever the label he is now set to become a national trademark.

Chelsea has applied to register their manager's name with the UK Patent Office, allowing him to promote everything from nappies to lipstick.

A Chelsea spokesman said they were covering all eventualities -- by listing as many products as they could think of. The inventory contains hundreds of different items, including lipstick, cigarette holders, handbags, dresses, nappies and romper suits.

Which should put a few more pennies into the 42-year-old's pocket -- already bulging with a reported pay packet of 5 million pounds a year.

Wright sees

FROM PAGE 12

An Australian team that have shown they were hungry to hit back after the immense fall-out at home from their Ashes loss to England.

"The passion is there. Because of who they are and where they've come from and the team meetings we've had, the (passion) is certainly there," Wright said.

"It's that same old empty feeling that you do experience when you don't come out at the right end of the game, so the big thing is tomorrow's match is important because the challenge of the series has gone and you will be able to judge us from that point of view. We can't drop off that easily."

Apart from Kumar Sangakkara, Chris Gayle and Andrew Flintoff with the bat and spinners Muttiah Muralitharan and Daniel Vettori, the collective world team has been desperately disappointing, with a lack of cohesion and player responsibilities within the team.

"You speak realistically, honestly. We came here to win cricket matches and we don't like to lose cricket matches, no matter who it is, particularly when it's a big event," Wright said.

"It is utterly no sense of being a junket. There is too much professionalism in this team."

"These guys are professional and as far as I am concerned I'll back them from that point of view. We just need a couple of big performances."

Australian all-rounder Andrew Symonds said the widespread criticism of the Australian's team's Ashes performance had stung the players to hit back on the field.

"We're a proud side, we don't like to be beaten. Some of the things that have been written have stirred the boys up to the betterment of the team," Symonds told reporters Saturday.

"We've reacted pretty well to the way people have looked at us. "The Test players looked like it (Ashes defeat) had soaked in and they had all thought about it and it was time to do something about it, and get chests out again."

"It was a case of don't be ashamed of what happened and let's learn from it and use it as our next challenge."

Unsporting Real?

Football

REUTERS, Madrid

Real Madrid are deliberately trying to pressurise the referee ahead of next week's city derby and are in danger of provoking violence by their unprecedented attack on his impartiality say Atletico Madrid.

Real said on Friday that the referee for next Saturday's match against Atletico had a record of prejudicing their interests in past encounters.

They also claimed that referee Bernardo Gonzalez Vazquez had been appointed as a result of pressure from Atletico and that he was a self-confessed supporter of arch-rivals Barcelona.

But Atletico responded to the accusations with a firm condemnation of Real's behaviour.

"Atletico Madrid would like to express their regret and their most energetic rejection of the information issued on Real Madrid's website," the club said in a statement.

"The accusations are false and tendentious and cause both offence and surprise given that they come from a club that claims to respect referees."

"Such deliberate and orchestrated statements can only provoke tension between the clubs ahead of the derby ... and generate violence between the fans as well as putting incredible pressure on the referee."

"Atletico Madrid would like to make it clear that they are only interested in obtaining success by means of the hard work and effort of our players on the pitch, respecting the rules of fair play and good conduct."

Real had launched an unprecedented attack on the referee via their official website on Friday.

"We now know the referee for next Saturday's game between Atletico Madrid and Real Madrid," they said.

"Bernardino Gonzalez Vazquez refereed Real Madrid against Villarreal last season, a game in which he clearly prejudiced the interests of the whites by making numerous errors, although that did not prevent a 2-1 victory for Madrid."

"At first Cesar Muniz Fernandez was going to referee the game, but following pressure from Atletico Madrid, Bernardino Gonzalez Vazquez, a self-confessed fan of Barcelona and a man who is protected by the president of the Referees'

Committee Victoriano Sanchez Armino, was chosen instead."

Real said that Gonzalez Vazquez was the author of what they claim were "seven deadly sins" in last season's match against Villarreal.

He sent off Real players Zinedine Zidane and Walter Samuel as well as Villarreal defender Quique Alvarez during the encounter at the Bernabeu.

Last month Real Madrid threatened to call for their 1-0 defeat at Espanyol to be overturned because they claimed the referee had blown his whistle moments before the winning goal was scored, but they eventually backed down.

Real president Florentino Perez has said on a number of occasions since coming to power five years ago that the club had a policy of not criticising referees and recently claimed that it would do all it could to help match officials do their job more effectively.

Neither the Spanish League (LFP) nor the Spanish Football Federation (RFEF) have made any comment about the case.

Messi waits his Argentine turn

REUTERS, Buenos Aires



Argentina's 18-year-old striker Lionel Messi says he will have a tough time breaking into the first team.

"It's difficult for me to win a place in a side with so many great players," the Barcelona forward told reporters on Friday as Argentina continued their preparations for the World Cup qualifier at home to Peru on Sunday.

"I'm happy just to have been picked (in the squad). But I really want to play and I'll be prepared when my turn comes."

The teenager, who helped Argentina win the World Youth Championship in June, is regarded as one of the country's most exciting young players.

"Messi plays the same way in

games as he does in training," said Boca Juniors goalkeeper Roberto Abbondanzieri.

"He's a player with great strength and he's going to give great satisfaction to Argentina."

Chelsea striker Hernan Crespo also praised Messi.

"He's a different player who makes a difference in the danger zone," said Crespo.

Messi was sent off less than two minutes into his debut after coming on as a substitute in the 2-1 win over Hungary in August.

He then came on in the 82nd minute of last month's 1-0 World Cup qualifying defeat in Paraguay, too late to make any impact.

Argentina, who lead the 10-nation South American qualifying group with 31 points from 16 games, have already booked their place in next year's World Cup finals.

'Let our football do the talking'

Football

AFP, London

Chelsea's success has created jealousy amongst rival teams, says Frank Lampard, and he has advised teammates to answer their critics with good form on the pitch rather than words off it.

The cash-rich Stamford Bridge outfit clinched their first title in 50 years last term and, after winning their first eight games, are already overwhelming favourites to emulate Manchester United as back-to-back Premier League winners.

Yet their success has not won Chelsea many friends, with many decrying the Blues for their 'boring' tactics, while Liverpool boss Rafael Benitez claimed ahead of Sunday's clash at Anfield the Londoners were

scared of his side.

The Spaniards' words were well and truly stuffed down his throat as Chelsea romped to a 4-1 triumph.

And Lampard wants to ensure his team continue to do their talking on the pitch rather than verbally responding to the taunts which are aimed at knocking Chelsea off their perch.

"The criticism is coming from the success we have had," said the England midfielder. "We have never really suffered that before. But because we won the title and have got the results we wanted to get this season, maybe people are looking for a chink in the armour."

"They are looking to say things which will disrupt you and unsettle you. It is up to us to keep doing our talking on the pitch and answering the questions every time we go out to play."

A man mountain

FROM PAGE 12

"His hapless running between wickets is legendary and most dangerous for his partners. Power is no surprise, but sublime touch is remarkable for a man of his bulk. He loathes exercise and often looks a passenger in the field, but with a willow between his palms he is suddenly galvanised."

"He plays shots all round the wicket, is especially strong off his legs, and unleashes ferocious pulls and lofted drives. Imran Khan rates him the best batsman in the world against pace."

If Inzamam gets his eye in, runs come thick and fast. Before he gets his eye in, his feet aren't always moving too briskly. His slow walk to the crease can take a while, and when he gets out his walk back to the dressing room can take forever.

Fielding at first slip, diving one-handed screamers are not his forte. He has been known to yawn. Repeatedly.

"My nature is that I am not very talkative and enthusiastic," Inzamam said.

"When I'm in the field, I'm trying hard."

There have been two memorable occasions, though, when Inzamam has run like the wind. The first was when he shot a commercial wearing a Mughal warrior dress and bolted towards the camera like a subcontinental version of Mel Gibson's Braveheart. What a sight. The second was during a game in Canada when he jumped the fence and set after a spectator who had likened him to a potato.

Unfortunately, the nickname stuck. Fortunately, another notable trait is a big hearty laugh, most endearingly at himself. Say hello to a crowd favourite.

-- INTERNET SOURCE

Tait could

FROM PAGE 12

The 22-year-old's quicker than expected recovery will be good news for Australia, whose pace bowling stocks are under pressure.

Jason Gillespie and Michael Kasprovic were dropped from the side after a disappointing Ashes series, while Glenn McGrath was rested for Friday's second one-day international against the World XI.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 That's a laugh!
5 Off-tattooed word
8 Scored 100
12 Banned apple-reddener
13 Sea urchin eggs
14 November responsibility
15 Musical based on "La Bohème"
16 Frivolous one in song
17 "— for All Seasons"
18 Noble Florentine name
20 Sylvester's impediment
22 "Laugh-in" catchphrase
26 Bicycle part
29 Privity
30 Trinity member

DOWN
9 Calm
10 LAX info
11 Lair
19 Army rank (Abbr.)
21 Judge
23 Big name in jeans
24 Fashion
25 Slaughter of baseball
26 Florist's supply
27 Discharge
28 Loss of a stripe
32 Cut
33 Chutist's release
35 Tackle moguls
36 Skedaddle
38 Intone
39 Bungle
42 Peter Fonda role
43 Authentic
44 Abundant source
45 Cleo's slayer
46 Caviar provider
48 George's brother

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CRYPTOQUIP

I C D G C T N - C K N H L G D V
V K L G O M D R F F J N C K G J R G O
T G V T G Q D M D , I K L F O J K L
Q R F F H C R H N F R V H T Q M R N ?
Yesterday's Cryptquip: IF A SHOREFRONT WERE KNOWN FOR ITS BREAD BAKERIES, YOU COULD CALL IT THE YEAST COAST.
Today's Cryptquip Clue: O equals D

The Cryptquip is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.