

7 Test players in Pak A side

REUTERS, Rawalpindi

The Pakistani selectors have announced a strong Pakistan A squad to take on England in the second three-day tour match in the eastern city of Lahore from November 6.

Batsman Hasan Raza, who has been named in Pakistan's squad for the first two Tests, will lead the A side which includes seven test players.

The selectors have not retained any of the players from the PCB Patrons XI which lost to England by 52 runs on Wednesday in the first three-dayer in Rawalpindi.

ASQUAD

Hasan Raza (captain), Imran Farhat, Taufeeq Umar, Shahid Yousuf, Faisal Athar, Mansoor Amjad, Ashad Khan, Aminur Rehman, Mohammad Asif, Shahid Nazir, Mohammad Khalil, Rizwan Ahmed, Junaid Zia and Usman Tariq.

Ponting takes Clarke under his wing

AFP, Brisbane

Australian captain Ricky Ponting is working with Michael Clarke to try to make the most of one of the great talents of Australian cricket.

Clarke's star has waned since his 151 in his debut Test against India in Bangalore and the 141 in his first home Test here against New Zealand a year ago.

In his next 17 innings the 24-year-old right-hander, known by teammates as 'Pup', has been unable to compile another Test century.

Ponting can identify with Clarke. He scored 96 in his first Test against Sri Lanka in Perth in 1995 and the first of his 23 Test centuries in his seventh Test match and has now amassed over 7,000 Test runs.

"I think he's finding his feet a little bit at Test level," Ponting said Wednesday before the first Gabba Test with the West Indies.

"We know he made a dynamic start and probably the same way that I did at the start. Our careers are following fairly similar paths.

"He's someone who's going to be around the team for some time, he's got immense ability and potential and he's moved up the order to No.4 spot, he's working extremely hard on his game.

"I've done a lot of one-on-one work with him over the last few weeks, talking about the game and working on a few technique side of things with his game.

"We know how good he can be and if he gets his game in order and keeps learning about himself and what he has to do to prepare for Test matches, then you'll see Michael Clarke make some big runs this summer."

Clarke has been elevated to No.4 in the Australian batting order, coming in after Ponting in the batting and taking the place of discarded Damien Martyn.

Kaushalya hits fastest fifty

AFP, Colombo

Former Sri Lankan international Kaushalya Weeraratne set a new limited-overs cricket record this week when he hit the fastest half-century off 12 balls in a domestic match here.

Weeraratne, 24, created the record on Tuesday playing for Ragama cricket club against Kurunegala in Sri Lanka's premier limited-overs tournament.

The effort surpassed England all-rounder Adam Hoolioake's half-century off 15 balls for Surrey against Yorkshire at Scarborough in 1994.

Weeraratne ended on an unbeaten 66 off 18 balls, an innings studded with eight sixes and two boundaries.

He took five successive sixes and a boundary in one over from 40-year-old left-arm spinner Ajith Ekanayake.

"I did not know it was a record until I heard it in the news," said Weeraratne, who represented Sri Lanka in 11 one-day internationals before being dropped.

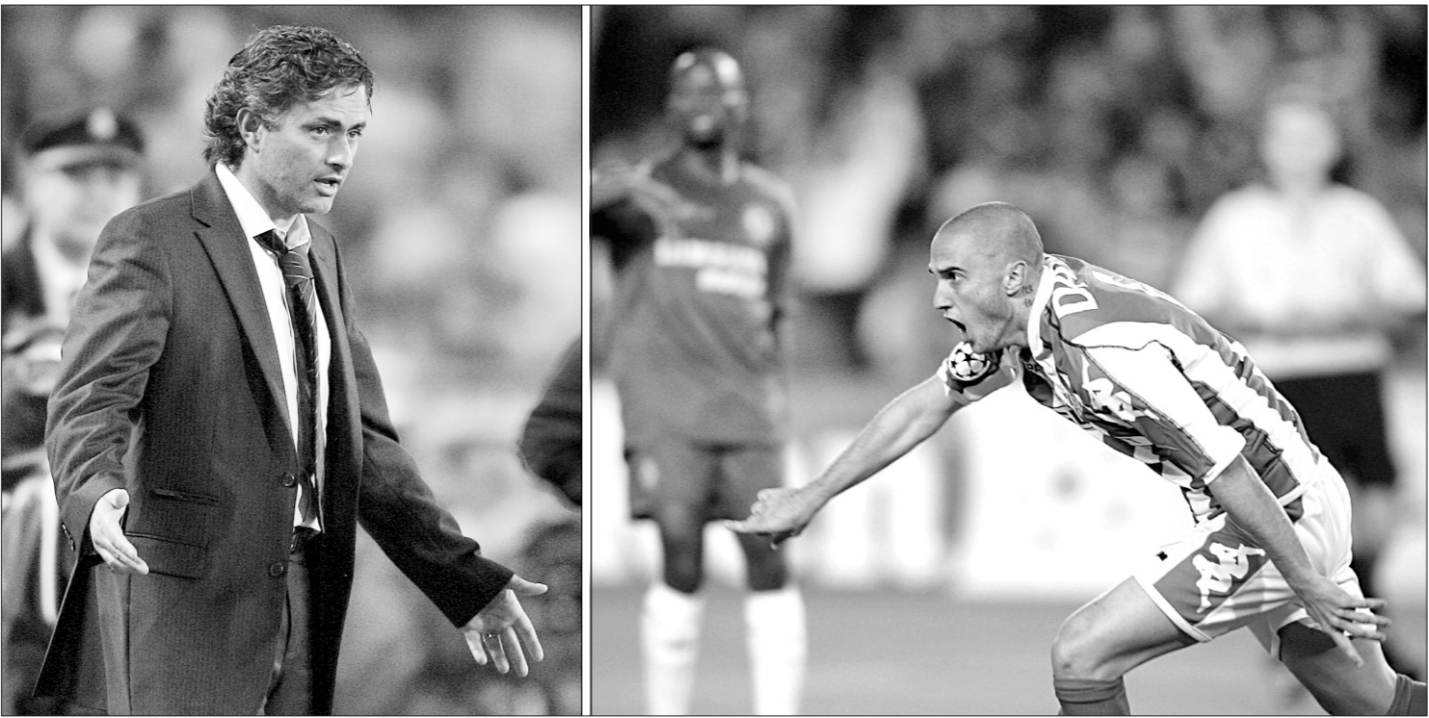
Weeraratne's feat, however, ended in vain as the match ended in a no-result due to rain.

Sri Lanka's senior squad is trailing 0-3 in a seven-match one-day series in India.

Another Sri Lankan, Sanath Jayasuriya, holds the record for the fastest half-century in one-day internationals. He made 50 off 17 balls against Pakistan in Singapore in April, 1996.

ONE-DAY'S FASTEST 50S

Balls	Batsman	Year
12	KWeeraratne	2005
15	AHoolioake	1994
16	GRose	1990
16	MFleming	1996
16	MFleming	1991
17	SJayasuriya	1996



PHOTOS: AFP

WHAT'S GOING ON? Chelsea coach Jose Mourinho (L) tries to come to terms after his side's defeat at Real Betis in the Champions League on Tuesday. Betis' Dani (R) celebrates after striking the winner.

Real Madrid, Lyon first in last 16



REUTERS, London

Real Madrid and Olympique Lyon became the first teams to qualify for the last 16 of the Champions League on Tuesday while European champions Liverpool took a giant stride towards joining them.

Seemingly omnipotent Chelsea however crashed to their first defeat of the season in regular time losing 1-0 at Real Betis in one of the night's two upsets, the other coming in the Netherlands where PSV Eindhoven beat AC Milan by the same score.

Inter Milan though had a far better night than their neighbours, coming from behind to beat Porto 2-1.

Real, bidding this term for a record-extending 10th European Cup win back in Paris where they won their first competition 50 seasons ago, brushed Rosenborg aside 2-0 in Trondheim.

The victory came courtesy of a Mikael Dorsin own goal after 26 minutes and a second from Guti four minutes before the break.

There were no more goals in the

second half but those strikes were enough to give Real victory and nine points from their four games leaving them second behind Lyon in Group F.

The French champions were in fine form in Greece where they thumped Olympiakos Pireaus 4-1 with all their goals coming in 16 minutes on either side of halftime.

Haruna Babangida put the Greeks ahead after only three minutes but Lyon stormed back with goals from Juninho Pernambucano four minutes before the break, followed by two from John Carew (44th and 57th) and one from Mahamadou Diarra (55).

Lyon (12 points) and Real (9) must finish first or second, leaving Rosenborg (3) and Olympiakos (0) battling it out for the UEFA Cup spot.

CHAMPIONS PERFORM

Liverpool also gave a performance worthy of their status as European champions with a 3-0 home win over Anderlecht at Anfield where the Belgians stretched their unwanted record of successive Champions League defeats to 11 matches.

Liverpool, who tend to reserve their best form for Europe, moved

to the brink of qualification for the knockout stage from Group G with goals from Fernando Morientes (34th), Luis Garcia (61st) and Djibril Cisse (89th).

Anderlecht's awful night was compounded by the 75th minute dismissal of striker Nenad Jestrovic after a clash with Liverpool's Momo Sissoko.

CHELSEA STUNNED

Liverpool top the group with 10 points, three clear of Chelsea (7) and four ahead of Real Betis (6) who stunned the English champions in Seville.

Chelsea's last defeat in regular playing time was 18 matches ago when they lost at Liverpool in the second leg of last season's Champions League semi-final.

They therefore started as firm favourites to beat Betis following their 4-0 victory over the Spaniards in London two weeks ago.

But Betis, who had lost all four home European matches to English clubs in the past, gave a vastly improved performance, battling for every ball as well as riding their luck.

Their perseverance paid off when substitute Dani scored after 28 minutes and, although Chelsea

went close to an equaliser 20 minutes from time when Michael Essien saw a shot hit both posts, Betis held on for three vital points.

MILAN LOSE

The other surprise came at PSV where the home side beat Milan 1-0 for their second home win over the Italians this year.

Their 3-1 victory over Milan in the second leg of the semi-finals last season was ultimately a hollow one as they went out on the away goals rule but this win has carried them to the top of Group E and in sight of the knockout rounds.

Jefferson Farfan scored the only goal after 12 minutes which lifted PSV up from third to top on seven points.

Milan, whose Dutch defender Jaap Stam saw red on his return to his homeland six minutes from time, are second with five points, the same as Schalke 04 who beat nine-man Fenerbahce 2-0 in Germany. The Turks slipped from second to fourth.

While Milan were losing, their arch-rivals and neighbours Inter came from behind to beat Porto 2-1 with two late goals from Julio Cruz to stay top of Group H. Artmedia twice came from behind to draw 2-2 with Rangers in Bratislava.

Inter, with nine points from four matches, look set to qualify while Artmedia (5), Rangers (5) and Porto (3) all still in the hunt for a place in the knockout phase.

RESULTS AT A GLANCE

Group E  
At Eindhoven, the Netherlands  
Eindhoven 1 AC Milan 0  
At Gelsenkirchen, Germany  
Schalke 04 2 Fenerbahce 0

Group F  
At Athens  
Olympiakos 1 Lyon 4  
At Trondheim, Norway  
Rosenborg 0 Real Madrid 2

Group G  
At Seville, Spain  
Real Betis 1 Chelsea 0  
At Liverpool, England  
Liverpool 3 Anderlecht 0

Group H  
At Bratislava  
Artmedia Bratislava 2 Rangers 2  
At Milan  
Inter Milan 2 Porto 1

PHOTO: AFP

The Juninho (L) free-kick is goal-bound during Lyon's Champions League clash at Olympiakos at the Karaiskaki Stadium in Piraeus, near Athens, on Tuesday.

Chelsea's worst performance



REUTERS, London

The worst display by Chelsea since he took charge has persuaded Jose Mourinho to stop talking and listen to his team's opinions ahead of a crunch league match against Manchester United.

Chelsea were a shadow of the side that has built a nine-point lead in the Premier League during Tuesday's 1-0 Champions League defeat by Real Betis.

They showed little application in the first half, giving the ball away far too often, and went behind to a goal from substitute Dani in the 28th minute.

Chelsea improved in the second half against an inspired Betis and were unlucky not to equalise when a shot by midfielder Michael Essien hit both posts without crossing the line.

However, Mourinho acknowl-

edged Chelsea did not deserve to avoid their first defeat inside regulation time this season.

"It was the worst performance since I arrived," Mourinho said. "I've been here for 15 months, perhaps 80 matches at Chelsea, and this was the worst performance.

"The first half was too bad to be true. Maybe the players thought it was a knockout game and we were 4-0 up.

"The attitude was too relaxed for a game when we're playing for points."

European champions Liverpool lead Group G with 10 points from four games after their 3-0 defeat of Anderlecht, and Chelsea have seven points, one ahead of Betis.

Chelsea's rampaging start to the season has been checked in the past 10 days with a 1-1 draw against Everton, a defeat on penalties in the League Cup against Charlton Athletic and now defeat by Betis.

Mourinho's bombastic rhetoric

has shown few signs of cooling despite the comparative setbacks but the Portuguese acknowledges it may now be time to lend an ear to others' opinions.

"This is the kind of game I want to analyse by full communication. I want to listen to my players," Mourinho said.

"The more they speak, the more I listen. We need that communication because the performance was not acceptable."

Whatever the Chelsea players say, they will be left in no doubt that more application and grit will be needed on Sunday against United, one of the biggest games of the domestic season.

The match at Old Trafford is seen by the media as a possible watershed in the career of United manager Alex Ferguson because defeat would end the home side's title aspirations after just 11 games. United are 13 points adrift of their London rivals.

Sachin won't

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Tendulkar, playing his first competitive event after a six-month injury lay-off, has been in top form and been a major factor in India taking a commanding 3-0 lead.

The 56-year-old former Australian batsman, however, said India could not afford to relax.

"If we continue to perform as well as we have done over the last three games we would do well here too. But if we don't do it, we will be in trouble," he said.

The team, led by Rahul Dravid, has made constant changes in the batting order which has brought stunning results but Chappell maintained these were not mere "experiments" but part of a "strategy" to flummox the Lankans.

"It's more to do with strategy rather than experimenting. We want to adapt to situations as they develop and as per the conditions available on any given day," he said.

Chappell also came to the defence of Virender Sehwag who was yet to come up with a big score in the series. He said Sehwag had played a vital role as a partner with Mahendra Singh Dhoni who hit an explosive 183 not out in the last match at Jaipur.

Batting failures doesn't worry Vaughan

REUTERS, Rawalpindi

Captain Michael Vaughan is not worried about England's batting failures in their opening tour match in Pakistan.

"No, it is not a worry. This was a practice match and it was not played in a Test match environment. We have the mental resolve for Test cricket," he told a news conference after England conjured a 52-run victory against a PCB Patron's XI.

England's only stand-out batting performance in the low-scoring game came from opener Marcus Trescothick who scored 124 and 38, when batting at nine, without being dismissed.

Reserve wicketkeeper Matthew Prior also made 50 in the first innings. The England captain said on Wednesday he was not happy with his own batting in the match. He collected just nine runs and said he would spend a lot of time in the nets.

Aussies go

FROM PAGE 12

"I had a chat with Brett yesterday. He's working very hard on being able to maintain line and length for longer periods of time in Test cricket, rather than be that out-and-out tearaway," Ponting said.

"He thinks that it will make him a better bowler by being more patient."

"I'll be still wanting him to bowl (with venom) more often than not in the Test, that's his greatest strength, to run in and be able to intimidate batsmen."

"But if he can couple that aggression with some really good line and length disciplined bowling then it will make him a better bowler."

Ponting said the Ashes loss to England was now behind the team but they would play the unpredictable West Indies the utmost respect during the three-Test series.

"We know they are a very dangerous side and we have spoken about that in our meetings," he said.

"Their batting is very good, they've got quality batsmen right down through their list and we've had a look at their bowlers (on tapes) and most of them can bowl quite quick and there are a lot of guys we haven't seen much before."

"It's a matter for us of winning the first hour of tomorrow's play and keeping the West Indies under pressure for long periods in this game."

"The Ashes loss is a long way behind us and the next time we play for them is a long time ahead of us, and we have to stay right in the present now and make sure we are paying attention to the West Indies team."

TEAMS

AUSTRALIA: Matthew Hayden, Mike Hussey, Ricky Ponting (captain), Michael Clarke, Simon Katich, Adam Gilchrist, Shane Watson, Shane Warne, Brett Lee, Nathan Bracken, Glenn McGrath.

WEST INDIES (from): Chris Gayle, Devon Smith, Ramnaresh Sarwan, Brian Lara, Shivnarine Chander-paul (captain), Marlon Samuels, Dwayne Bravo, Dinesh Ramdin, Tino Best, Daren Powell, Fidel Edwards, Jermaine Lawson, Corey Collymore.

Umpires: Ian Howell and Rudi Koertzen (both South Africans)

Arjuna fears

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"When a senior pro like Sourav Ganguly cannot find a place, and he would soon I am sure, it brings the hunger back in the team," he said.

Former captain Ganguly, one of only four players in the world to score more than 10,000 one-day runs, was not picked despite scoring a century in a domestic first-class match last month.

'Get rid of 'em in January'



Football

AFP, London

Manchester United captain Roy Keane reportedly wants the club to get rid of their under-performing stars in the January transfer window.

Keane blasted his teammates in an interview with United's television station MUTV which manager Alex Ferguson ordered to be pulled.

It followed the 4-1 weekend mauling at Middlesbrough in the Premiership. United are seventh in the table, 13 points behind leaders Chelsea with one game in hand.

"There is talk about putting this right in January and bringing players in," Keane told MUTV according to the Daily Mirror. "We should be doing the opposite - we should be getting rid of people in January."

England defender Rio Ferdinand was one of the teammates Keane singled out for criticism.

"Just because you are paid 120,000 pounds a week and play well for 20 minutes against Tottenham, you think you are a superstar," said Keane.

"The younger players have been let down by some of the more experienced ones - they are not leading. There is a shortage of characters."

"It seems to be in this club that you have to play badly to be rewarded. Maybe that is what I should do when I come back - play badly."

Keane, currently sidelined with a broken foot, was not shocked by the heavy defeat at the Riverside.



Roy Keane

"I wasn't surprised by the result. I had been expecting one like this. The players have been asked questions and they are just not coming up with the answers."

"I am sick of having to say it and they are sick of listening to me. They have let down the club, the manager and the fans."

Mourinho, Wenger on warpath?



AFP, London

Jose Mourinho has escalated his war of words with Arsene Wenger by revealing that he has compiled a 120-page file of comments the Arsenal manager has made about Chelsea over the last 12 months.

The extraordinary statement from Mourinho came in the wake of Chelsea's 1-0 Champions League defeat by Real Betis in Seville on Tuesday night and was a direct response to stinging criticism from Wenger hours earlier.

Wenger had hinted that he could seek redress through the courts or the Football Association over Mourinho's description of him as a "voyeur," obsessed with everything about Chelsea.

But he also veered into personal abuse with what was widely interpreted as a jibe at Mourinho. "If you give success to stupid people, then it makes them more stupid sometimes and not more intelligent," Wenger told reporters.

Mourinho, who was already in a bad mood after what he described as the worst performance of his time in charge at Chelsea, responded by insisting he would not be the first to call a truce in the dispute.

"We have a file of quotes from Mr. Wenger about Chelsea Football Club in the last 12 months," he said.

"It is not a file of five pages, it's a file of 120 pages, so we have a very strong reaction. I accept it has to stop but if he doesn't stop, we are there."

Relations between Mourinho and Wenger have never been better than frosty but it was comments from the Arsenal boss last week that lit the fire now burning out of control.

Wenger, who is much appreciated by journalists for his willingness to respond directly to most questions, suggested Chelsea may have lost a little

bit of self belief following a 1-1 draw with Everton, which ended their winning start to the season in the league, and a League Cup exit at the hands of Charlton.

That prompted Mourinho to claim Wenger was rattled by Chelsea's success. "I think he is one of these people who is a voyeur," the Portuguese coach claimed.

Wenger branded that remark "out of order, disconnected from reality and disrespectful," and added: "I will see if I take any action on that."

Wenger insisted that he had simply been attempting to answer questions about Chelsea, rather than deliberately setting out to make comments aimed at unsettling the champions.

As well as a potential legal action for slander, Wenger could ask the Football Association to charge Mourinho with bringing the game into disrepute, although he may not be immune from such a charge himself.

The Frenchman insisted: "I'm not obsessed at all with Chelsea. I'm at a club where I'm very happy. Things have changed over the years in English football."

"There wasn't anything malicious in what I said. I was asked a question about Chelsea and I gave an honest answer, just as I expect any other manager to do when he is asked about Arsenal."

"I can't see what is wrong there, or we would all have to close our Press conferences."

Sami likely

FROM PAGE 12

selection committee, told CricInfo, "Sami has got a small niggles but he is hoping to be fit in time for the Test. The team management has not yet asked for a replacement to be picked and Sami is receiving treatment with the physiotherapists at the moment. We can't rule him out definitely just yet."

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

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CRYPTOQUIP

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HUBSWLWF GUQTFB GLC IFFM

SYSQFT "GUHF: L QULM." Yesterday's Cryptquip: IF YOUR FORMER HUSBAND LIKES TAKING EXTRA-LONG BATHS, YOU COULD CALL HIM A CLEAN EX.

Today's Cryptquip Clue: F equals E

The Cryptquip is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that