

Gayle to miss Test after heart op

REUTERS, Sydney

West Indies batsman Chris Gayle is out of this week's third Test against Australia after undergoing corrective surgery for a heart complaint.

The Jamaican was forced to retire during the second test in Hobart when his heart starting beating irregularly, but he returned to the crease after a short rest and made 56. After complaining of dizziness he was diagnosed with an irregular heartbeat.

Gayle said the condition was not serious and he initially planned to have the problem fixed once he returned home at the end of the tour. But team officials said he decided to have the procedure done in Melbourne on Wednesday, ruling him out of the final test, starting in Adelaide on Friday.

West Indies manager Anthony Howard said in a statement "We are all happy to learn that his procedure was a success."

Gayle is expected to be released from the hospital today and should be able to resume playing soon.

He is the second West Indies player to be ruled of the Adelaide test within the last 24 hours. Marlon Samuels was also forced out with a knee injury.

No Razzaq for third Test

AFP, Faisalabad

Pakistani all rounder Abdul Razzaq has been ruled out of next week's third and final Test against England and remains doubtful for the one-day series due to a lingering elbow injury he picked up during training.

A Pakistan Cricket Board official said Razzaq had not been cleared to play in the Lahore test starting on November 29 as he was still recovering from the injury that kept him out of the first two matches of the series.

PCB director of cricket operations Saleem Altaf said "He has improved 40 percent but the medical board says he needs more time to be 100 percent fit."

He added "Even when he is cleared, obviously we would like him to play a couple of practice games and see him bowl a few overs before he can be considered for national selection."

Altaf said it was too early to say if Razzaq would be fit in time for the five-match one-day series starting on December 10 in Lahore.

Pakistan go into the third test without pace bowler Shabbir Ahmed after he was reported for a suspect action and all rounder Shahid Afridi, who picked up a one-match ban for scuffing the pitch in the second test.

Barmy Army dried up

REUTERS, Faisalabad

England's "Barmy Army" of travelling cricket fans are used to basking in the evening sunshine with a cold beer, as they discuss the day's play.

Things are rather different, though, for the 40 or so fans who have followed England to Pakistan and are having to adapt to another kind of tour.

"Instead of being in a bar drinking I'm finding myself sipping tea at some stall at 10 in the evening," said Rob Grace, a 34-year-old lift engineer from Northampton in central England.

Alcohol is officially banned for Muslims in Pakistan and, even for tourists, can be hard to find. British newspapers reported that the conservative city of Multan, where the first test was held earlier this month, had only one place selling alcohol and that closed at five p.m.

Fans say the heightened security on the tour is also creating an element of fear and preventing opportunities to explore historical or adventurous destinations.

"You could walk down the streets at night in Bangladesh and there were no problems," said Ken Wilkins, a 65-year-old Welshman.

"Pakistan is far worse. I'm enjoying it but it's not as much fun."

Wilkins came to Pakistan on his own and after the seven-week tour, which will cost him about \$2,570 using budget hotels, he will move on to India for three months.

The Barmy Army accounts for the majority of England fans on tour. They save up enough money to be able to travel freely in the British winter.

Adrian Fox, a 43-year-old restaurateur from Sheffield in northern England, persuaded security officials to allow him to stand by television cameramen to gain a superior aerial view. He said the Barmy Army was breaking up, as fans did not like the way it had "sold out" by becoming a tour company.

Some England fans accuse the Barmy Army of being too exclusive and not mixing enough with the local people.



PHOTO: AFP

Juventus striker Alessandro Del Piero celebrates after scoring the all-important goal for the Italian giants against Belgium's FC Brugge during their UEFA Champions League match in Turin on Tuesday.

MU in uncharted territory

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United manager Sir Alex Ferguson couldn't be too upset at the goalless draw as his side failed to create too many chances with Ronaldo missing the clearest of them with a header. Benfica were equally shy against Lille -- who sensationally beat United 1-0 earlier this month -- but Koeman did not dismiss their chances when they play United in a fortnight's time.

"It will be difficult but not impossible," said the former Dutch footballing great, who has found managerial life a tougher task and his present side are struggling in the championship race.

While both Ferguson and Koeman were thinking of their clash Juventus

coach Fabio Capello was keener to dismiss rumours about his future after he had been linked with the Real Madrid job with one radio station claiming it was a done deal.

"There is absolutely no truth in that story," he said bluntly after Juve's victory which sealed a place in the knockout stages of the Champions League.

"I don't know where it came from. It's fantasy football. I've said in the past I don't like these re-hashed stories. I'm only thinking about Juventus."

Bayern's romp featured Roy Makaay's first two goals of the campaign but also saw Sebastian Deisler's steady recovery on and off the pitch --

he has twice been treated for depression -- continue as he rattled in his third goal in as many Champions League matches.

"It is great to have three Champions League goals already," enthused Deisler.

"I am playing with a lot of confidence and so is the team. I think it is too early to say what we can do in this competition -- we will just have to wait and see."

For United fans it is more a case of anxiously waiting to see if their side even makes the last 16. If they don't, it could cost the club 15 million pounds -- and perhaps see Ferguson joining Keane quicker than he imagined.

Fergie doesn't give in



AFP, Manchester

Sir Alex Ferguson is confident that Manchester United can keep their Champions League campaign alive by beating Benfica in Lisbon next month.

Shrugging off another goalless European display from his side in Tuesday's draw with Spanish side Villarreal, the Scot voiced optimism that his youngsters could come through what will be an extremely testing examination without the steady presence of the recently departed Roy Keane.

"Obviously we have a big job now in Benfica," Ferguson said. "It is a game we have to win and, for the last game in the group, it is quite an unusual situation for us."

The open nature of Group D, in which all four teams will go into their final matches knowing that victory will put them into the knockout stage, gave Ferguson grounds for his optimism, as well as a performance here that he judged much better than the scoreline suggested.

"They proved their worth in terms of the experience they had at the back, that was the strength of their team and they were very committed."

"But I think the main attacking thrust was always from us and we were a bit unlucky with the chances we had."

"It is easy to say that we didn't score a goal but we played a lot of good football at times and I think we deserved better."

Ferguson's tone was appropriately measured for, despite Wayne

Rooney's best efforts, United could not complain too loudly about a result which means they have scored just twice in five Champions League outings this season.

The home side's chances were scarce once more on Tuesday but sufficient to have secured a victory that would have left them in a much more comfortable position in the group.

Lille's draw with Benfica in Tuesday's other Group D match means United could yet squeeze into the last 16 with a draw, but only if Villarreal beat the French side in their final match.

Portugal winger Cristiano Ronaldo squandered the best of United's chances here, failing to hit the target with a free header from eight yards out mid-way through the second half.

"It was a good chance," Ferguson admitted. "He is a good header of the ball and you would expect him to score."

Deprived of their leading scorer Diego Forlan and playmaker Juan Roman Riquelme, Villarreal needed outstanding performances from goalkeeper Mariano Barbosa and centreback Gonzalo Rodriguez to keep United at bay, but their coach Manuel Pellegrini felt his side had merited their point.

"In the first half, Manchester United played at a very high tempo and they pushed us back but in the second half we controlled the game better and overall I think we deserved a draw," he said.

Keane's abrupt departure from Old Trafford last week was marked by a few chants from the supporters who had

idolised the former United skipper.

But the tribute was cut short by Rooney's apparent determination to exact swift revenge on opponents against whom he earned a first European red card in September.

Within three minutes, the England forward had had three shots on goal.

The first, after he had swivelled on Cristiano Ronaldo's cross and squeezed between two defenders, was kept out by an excellent close range block from Barbosa.

The second, from 25 yards, spun wide and the third would have given Barbosa more work to do if Ruud van Nistelrooy had not got in the way.

That was pretty much it however in terms of clear chances until Ferguson introduced Park Ji-Sung for Darren Fletcher ten minutes into the second half.

Five minutes later, Rooney presented the Korean with the opportunity to put United ahead, but Gonzalo came to Villarreal's rescue with a good block.

Park, at least, had managed to direct his effort goalwards. An even more inviting chance was to be spurned by Ronaldo, who could only manage the faintest of contacts on Wes Brown's cross with just over 20 minutes left to play.

Gary Neville's introduction for the final quarter of an hour lifted the crowd but Keane's likely successor could not galvanise his teammates.

Rooney almost provided a dramatic finale when he cracked a fierce half-volley fractionally over with three minutes remaining. But Villarreal, tough nuts that they are, never looked like being cracked open.

Bangladesh 5-0 down in Iran

BDNEWS, Dhaka

Bangladesh conceded a 5-0 defeat to Iran in the away match of the AFC U-20 Football Championship qualifiers in Tehran yesterday.

Bangladesh were trailing the first half 2-0.

Bangladesh finished the match with nine players as striker Mithun and midfielder Mamun were sent off either side of the break.

The Bangladeshi youth team could not perform well in chilly weather of three to five degrees Celsius, according to a message received in Dhaka.

The second leg game will be held at the Bangabandhu National Stadium in Dhaka on November 27.

England yet 7th

BBC/AFP, undated

England remain ninth in the latest FIFA world rankings, meaning they are still well-placed to gain a seeding for the 2006 World Cup.

FIFA is expected to use the world rankings and performances at the last World Cup to calculate the seedings.

The Czech Republic have moved up to second behind Brazil.

Scotland moved up one spot to 61st, Northern Ireland (101st) advanced by three and Wales (72nd) gained a place despite a friendly defeat to Cyprus.

TOPTEN

| Pos | Country | Points |
|-----|-----------|--------|
| 1 | Brazil | 841 |
| 2 | Czech Rep | 796 |
| 3 | Holland | 791 |
| 4 | Argentina | 774 |
| 5 | France | 772 |
| 6 | Spain | 771 |
| 7 | Mexico | 768 |
| 8 | USA | 766 |
| 9 | England | 757 |
| 10 | Portugal | 754 |

Div Two hockey

FROM PAGE 12

Three groups to participate in the competition. The group champions and runners-ups will play in the super six stage.

TEAMS

- GROUP A:** Barnak, Udiy, Raktim Sangha, Rayer Bazar.
GROUP B: Police, PWD, Dhaka Young Star, East End Green.
GROUP C: Uttara Hockey Club, Dilkusha, Tejgaon Agragami, Dhaka Hockey Club.

Brazilian TT

FROM PAGE 12

As a coach earlier this year. I have already visited Venezuela, Argentina, Peru and Guatemala all of this time. I have a 35-day mission to Malaysia, Bangladesh, Pakistan and parts of Europe.

"I will work about coach's education and talk with senior players in Bangladesh and give them a few tips during my short stay."

Bangladesh chase

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who is now with the team as manager, was excited by the youngsters' performances in the match, especially the way they chased a huge total.

"It was not easy to chase a huge total on the low-bouncing wicket but the young guys showed unbelievable temperament, which is not common in our cricket," excited Faruque told the Daily Star Sport over the telephone.

The former national captain heaped much praise on young opener Tamim. "It was a fantastic experience for me to watch such brilliant batting from a young Bangladeshi batsman (Tamim). I tell you he could be a dangerous batsman because he has the potential," he said.

"Shuvo also did a brilliant job to turn the match in our favour. I was pleasantly surprised by his attitude during the game. The way he kept his nerve in the middle was unbelievable," he added.

Faruque, however, was a little bit frustrated with the fact that Bangladesh has no chance to qualify for the final despite the two consecutive wins, as India and Sri Lanka are already set for a November 27 final.

"But we will try to win our last match against a very strong South Africa because it will help us in the coming triangular series at home," said Faruque, adding that the Under-19 team for the tri-nation series will be finalised today.

SCORES IN BRIEF

PAKISTAN UNDER-19: 252 all out in 49.1 overs (Ali 75, Mohammad 51, Asad 32, Sarfaraz 54, extras 17, Dollar 1-55, Nabil 1-47, Mehrab 3-27, Shuvo 4-52).

BANGLADESH UNDER-19: 255: 255-9 in 47.4 overs (Tamim 61, Sakib 17, Mehdi 36, Shuvo 67 not out, Ayub 18, extras 30; Samshad 3-57, Waseem 2-32, Ali 2-24).
Result: Bangladesh Under-19 won by one wicket.

'We can remain the same'

Football

REUTERS, Madrid

Barcelona forward Ronaldinho sees no reason why his side cannot continue their sparkling run of form following their performances against Real Madrid and Werder Bremen.

"With the quality of players we have I think we can carry on playing like this for quite a long time," the Brazilian told reporters after Barca's 3-1 victory over Bremen at the Nou Camp.

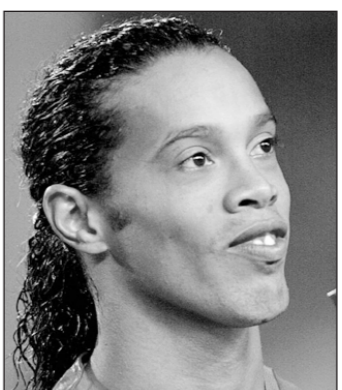
"With every game we win we are happier and more confident and our aim is to carry on like this."

It was a seventh straight victory in major competitions for the Spanish champions, leaving them with the statistic of 24 goals for and just two against.

Ronaldinho, who masterminded his side's stunning 3-0 win over arch-rivals Real on Saturday, followed up his Bernabeu masterclass with another

virtuoso display. He scored one and set up the others for midfielder Gabri and striker Henrik Larsson to lead his side to a comprehensive victory that ensured them of top spot in Group C.

"I'm still young and I think I can get better, that's why I work hard in training," said the Brazilian who is hot



RONALDINHO

favourite to be named European Footballer-of-the-Year next week.

The performance against the Germans was all the more impressive because coach Frank Rijkaard decided to rest leading players such as top scorer Samuel Eto'o, influential playmaker Xavi and Argentine teenager Lionel Messi.

"It's a pleasure to have a squad like this because the way the team is working it means that whoever steps in to the team performs at the same level as everyone else," said the Dutchman.

Ronaldinho also gave his backing to Rijkaard's policy of rotating the players in his squad, saying that it helped to strengthen the team.

"It is important that everyone plays," he said. "The players that don't usually play are never sad, they never cause any problems and are always keen to play. They are always there to help us and that is what makes a winning team."

Gunners told to stay on ground



AFP, London

Arsene Wenger has warned his Arsenal stars to keep their feet on the ground after they swept into the last 16 of the Champions League as Group B winners with five wins out of five.

A late penalty from Robert Pires secured a 1-0 win over ten-man FC Thun in Switzerland on Tuesday night. But the Gunners boss is acutely aware that much tougher tests lie ahead than that offered by the Swiss minnows.

"This will give us confidence but we are not going to go overboard," Wenger said.

"It was important to finish the job and top the group. It means we have the second game at home in the last 16 and will play against the second team of another group."

"But that does not necessarily mean we get the easiest draw. It is a different competition now. With direct knockout, the real competition starts."

Arsenal made hard work of breaking down Thun after their defender Armand Deumi was dismissed in the 34th minute for pulling down Robin

van Persie after the Dutch winger had sprung their offside trap.

"It was a good quality game as long as it was 11 against 11," reflected Wenger.

"The referee had no choice but once their player was sent off the level of the game dropped."

"We lost our concentration a bit and they had less resources to put us under pressure, although they were still dangerous on the break."

Arsenal would have had an easier result but for an off-night from captain Thierry Henry, who marked a club-record 70th European appearance by missing a number of chances.

"We didn't really play well, we should have played more of our passing game," Arsenal defender Philippe Senderos admitted after his return to his native Switzerland.

"Thun took hold of the match, they gave us trouble. But the important thing is we came away with the three points."

Thun remain in third place in the group with three points and will secure a slot in the UEFA Cup with a draw in their final group match against Sparta Prague in the Czech Republic.

National booters survive

FROM PAGE 12

enjoyed superior ball possession, Bulbul almost doubled the lead in similar fashion nine minutes later with a through from Ghanaian booter Ibrahim.

But Aminul left his line to block the ball but the goalkeeper picked a minor injury in his mouth. His replacement Biplab handed over the second goal to Bulbul as soon as the game resumed. Picking up Biplab's feeble freekick -- his first touch on the ball -- from inside the box, Bulbul raced past Rajani to neatly place a left footer into the near post.

With the defence already in tatters, the national team almost conceded a third but Bulbul denied himself a hat-trick, placing the ball just wide from a handshaking distance.

The men in red then began to regroup and Matiu Munna rattled the crossbar before Farhad split the rival defence, but skipper Joy and Ujjal both failed to convert the chances in injury time.

Unlike their first exhibition match against Mohammedan, which the national team won 2-1 last week, the Argentine coach kept his best eleven on the pitch, showing desperation to win the game.

Although they looked slower and penetrated less before the break, it did not take long to reduce the margin. It was veteran Alfaz, playing in the midfield, who struck first when he headed home Arman's corner from the right in the 65th minute.

Three minutes later, it was again Alfaz who nodded a darting cross from overlapping rightback Hassan Al Mamun into the near post. With Abahani tiring out, the national team pressed hard but substitute Kanchan's effort hit the base of the upright before Sujon leaped high in the air to head another corner by Arman past goalkeeper Nizam for the 75th minute match-winner.

After the match, the 41-year-old Argentine coach denied media reports that he had said he might not

return to Bangladesh after the Xmas vacation because 'he was unhappy' with the federation.

"I was angry for some reasons yesterday but I never said I am leaving Bangladesh," Cruciani said while the reporters queried about some press reports published yesterday.

"I am thinking of nothing but football and I am happy that the boys innovated something and took the aerial way to score," he said about the headed goals.

"It was a bit difficult for us early because the opposition, especially their foreign players, were not in exhibition-match mood. They did some hard tackles and I became worried about injuries. I even requested their management to slow down," he informed.

The national team will play their third and final warm-up match at the same venue against Brothers Union on December 1.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

- 1 Destroy
- 6 Not upright
- 11 Fall, e.g.
- 12 Proportions
- 14 Costume ball
- 15 Islamic temple
- 16 Ant.
- 17 Entreaties
- 19 Coffee-shop vessel
- 20 Three-sloth
- 22 Young fellow
- 23 Certain student
- 24 Over
- 26 Knights' tunics
- 28 Part of UCLA
- 30 Muppet eagle
- 31 They don't belong
- 35 Type of card
- 39 Trapped in --

DOWN

- 1 Arm
- 2 Grated
- 3 Abbr. after a surname
- 4 Brilliant stroke
- 5 Ring
- 6 Navy batters
- 7 New Mexico art colony
- 8 "Monty Python" opener
- 9 Bar stuff
- 10 Went sight-seeing
- 11 Struck U.S.-born saint
- 18 Corrode
- 21 Dutch earthenware
- 28 Giggly noise
- 41 Radio innards
- 44 Mysterious character
- 45 Trig function
- 48 Proof abbr.
- 50 Concorde, e.g.

Solution time: 27 mins.

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