

Bad news for Naved

AFP, Karachi

Pakistan fear seamer Navedul Hasan will miss their four-match Test series against England starting next month due to a serious groin injury, an official said Thursday.

The 28-year-old Naved, who has played eight Tests and 45 one-day internationals, suffered the injury during the ongoing county season and returned home last week.

"Naved is a doubtful starter as he has been advised six weeks' rest and his groin injury seems very serious," Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) director Abbas Zaidi told AFP.

A final decision will be taken after the PCB medical commission examine the reports in the next few days.

It is the latest blow to Pakistan's build-up for the tour after fast bowler Shoaib Akhtar was ruled out of the Tests due to an ankle injury last week.

Naved took 34 wickets in five matches for Sussex in the English season and received a special cash award for taking 27 wickets in the month of May.

His exploits in the county season were seen as a major boost for Pakistan in the Test and one-day series.

Zaidi said the PCB had sought foreign expertise to get Naved fit.

"We are also contacting experts in England to get him fit early and hope that he takes part in some matches on the tour. It's disappointing news for us," said Zaidi, who added that Rao Iftikhar or Samiullah Niazami may replace Naved in the 16-man squad.

Roger wins on grass

BBC ONLINE, undated

Roger Federer won his first grass court match of the season, beating Rohan Bopanna 7-6, 6-2 in the first round of the Gerry Weber Open in Halle, Germany.

Three days after losing the French Open final to Rafael Nadal, the Swiss proved too strong for the Indian number one.

"I didn't expect much from this match," said Federer. "I was a bit exhausted from the pressure of recent weeks."

Federer, aiming for his fourth straight Halle title, plays France's Richard Gasquet in the second round.

Last year, Federer struggled past Sweden's Robin Soderling in his first match, losing the first set, but went on to beat Russia's Marat Safin in the final.

"I'm not worried about finding my rhythm for Wimbledon," he said after his 37th successive victory on grass.

His latest win left him four short of Bjorn Borg's record of 41 straight wins, but Federer added: "Streaks are not important to me. Winning titles is."

Federer was joined in the second round by Arnaud Clement of France who beat Dane Kristian Pless 7-5, 6-3.



Did U Know?

The man behind Chile's successful bid to host the 1962 World Cup Carlos Dittborn failed to fulfill his dream of seeing the tournament held in his country. He died of a heart attack at the age of 38, one month before the competition.



Carlos Alberto Parreira
(Brazil football coach)

"If you play your best at the start, then there's no room for improvement. We're thinking big, we intend to play seven games here and we want to go better as we go on."

After beating Croatia 1-0 in their World Cup opener.



Sumi Akhtar (R), the lucky first prize winner of The Daily Star-Rangs Toshiba World Cup Quiz 2006 Round 2, receives a 21-inch Toshiba Bomba Flat TV from the managing director of Rangs Industries Limited Rume Hossain (L) at the Rangs Bhaban in Bijoy Sarani on Thursday.

Another WI escape act



AFP, Gros Islet

Brian Lara collected his 32nd Test hundred to earn West Indies a hard-fought draw in the rain-marred second Test against India on Wednesday at the Beausejour Cricket Ground.

The 37-year-old Lara hit 120 -- only his second Test hundred against the Indians -- as West Indies, following on 373 runs behind of first innings, finished on 294 for seven in their second innings to leave the four-Test series level at 0-0.

Lara reached his hundred when he square drove Irfan Pathan for the ninth of his 10 boundaries and drew level with former Australia captain Steve Waugh for the third highest number of Test hundreds.

India's Sachin Tendulkar, who was prevented from making this trip by injury, heads the list with 35 Test hundreds.

Compatriot Sunil Gavaskar is second on the list with 34, and Lara and Waugh follow.

The West Indies captain battled away for a little over 6-1/2 hours and faced 307 balls to give West Indies their lifeline.

He added 129 for the fourth wicket with his predecessor Shivnarine Chanderpaul, who scored 54, and put on 71 for the fifth wicket with compatriot Dwayne Bravo, who made 47.

Anil Kumble was the most successful Indian bowler with three wickets for 98 runs from 42 overs, and Munaf Patel took two for 50 from 21 overs.

Virender Sehwag, who scored 180 in India's mammoth first innings total of 588 for eighth declared and snared four wickets in the Test, won the man-of-the-match award.

West Indies continued from their bedtime total on the third day

of 43 for one, after a complete washout of the entire fourth day, and suffered two setbacks in the first half-hour.

Kumble, who became Test cricket's fourth highest wicket-taker, completely bamboozled Daren Ganga with a googly and bowled him for 26 offering no stroke.

Sarwan, the West Indies vice captain, whose batting helped the home team clinch the preceding limited-overs series, again failed, when he was caught behind for one off a well-pitched out-swing from Patel to leave West Indies 52 for three.

Lara and Chanderpaul showed level heads however, to defy the Indian attack for the rest of the morning, and carried West Indies to 130 for three at lunch.

Lara had inside-edged a drive at a flighted delivery outside the off-stump from Kumble for two to the fine leg region to bring up his 50.

After the interval, Lara and Chanderpaul, easily West Indies' two most experienced batsmen, continued merrily along their way.

Chanderpaul swung Anil Kumble behind square for his sixth four to reach his 50, but trying to hit a full toss from the leg-spin bowler over mid-wicket he was caught at mid-on for 54. He struck half-dozen boundaries from 113 balls in just under three hours.

Lara continued to bat with grit and arrived at his landmark. He looked set for a much larger innings, when the umpire Asad Rauf dubiously adjudged him lbw to Sehwag to a ball that television replays clearly showed pitched outside off-stump and spun away.

His departure energised India, and bearing in mind West Indies' capitulation in their second innings of the first Test, the visitors moved in for the kill.

Bravo had shown great application for close 2-1/2 hours in which he struck three fours and one six

Racist assault on cricketers

PTI, Belfast

A group of teenage Indian cricketers were chased and threatened by racist thugs in Belfast city centre, and Police today said they are investigating a racist motive to the incident.

The young tourists, who were in Northern Ireland as members of an under-19 cricket tour, were terrified by the incident, according to a report in 'The Times'.

Five of the tourists were chased by up to 16 youths as they walked around the city on Sunday, while a house in which some of them were staying was stoned.

Nobody is believed to have been hurt in the incidents.

Politicians condemned the attack saying it confirmed Belfast's reputation as 'Europe's racist capital'.

Naomi Long, a cross-community Alliance Party member of the Northern Ireland Assembly, said: "This is yet another low -- a racist attack on visitors to our city. Locals and visitors alike will be suitably alarmed. This is another reminder of the need to destroy the scourge of racism in our society."

Bhasker Sharma, one of the team members said, "About 15 to 16 boys came and I don't know what happened. They just started chasing us."

Rajeev Khanna, another team member said: "It is not the first time we have come to the UK. It's been our eighth or ninth time. And we have never faced this situation anywhere in the UK." Robin Newton, the democratic Unionist Party councillor for East Belfast, said: "It is disgraceful that gifted young sportsmen cannot wander around admiring the capital without local thugs attempting to do them harm."

Third Eye

FROM PAGE 21

perhaps the best team goal of the tournament as Torres stabbed home a five-pass move. What is more worrying than the scoreline would be the zeal and enthusiasm with which the Spanish had played the game. Too often Spain have failed to live up to expectations. How they would cherish a different outcome this time. Their fans were doubtless screaming "Viva la Espana" long into the night!

There was drama in Munich though, and of the good kind as perhaps the first Arab derby in the World Cup threw up a match that lived up to expectations. The futuristic Allianz Arena saw on display two evenly matched sides both of whom refused to give an inch. After Tunisia had taken a first half lead courtesy Jaziri's acrobatic effort, the Saudis fought back. But it was not until the second half when Qahatani's sliding effort bought them back level. All this was prelude to the drama that unfolded in the last ten minutes of the match as the Saudi's first took the lead through old man Sami-Al Jabri's immaculately placed left foot effort. Incidentally the goal put him in the bracket of stars like Pele and Maradona in being one of the few men to have scored a World Cup goal 12 years after their maiden one. A famous victory was denied however by Jaidi who snatched a late goal to end the match all square.

But if there was drama in Munich, then pulses were racing at Dortmund where Germany finally managed to shed their European voodoo with a win over Poland. It marked the first time that Germany had beaten a European team in a major tournament since 1996. It is a monkey they will gladly have off their backs and it arrived in the most sensational of circumstances. Late second half substitute David Odonkor raced down the right flank and sent in a cross that was bootied in by fellow

substitute Oliver Neuville. And all that happened in the 92nd minute after it seemed that the Germans would have to settle for a goalless draw. Germany had pressed right from the start but they played a much more stable game than the gung-ho tactics against Costa Rica. Ballack was back anchoring the midfield and he did so with aplomb. But both forwards wasted gilt edged opportunities and midfielder Schweinsteiger had a very poor game. Their endless prodding did have a glorious final outcome however and Germany are all but assured of their place in the second round.

All in all it was a stupendous day of football where drama, flair and efficiency all showed itself in equal measure.

KP ready for Twenty20

BBC ONLINE, undated

Kevin Pietersen is likely to face Sri Lanka in Thursday's Twenty20 game after overcoming a hamstring injury.

Pietersen missed the one-day victory over Ireland on Tuesday as a precaution but new skipper Andrew Strauss said: "It's pretty much all right now."

"There was no point in risking him but he should be OK for the Twenty20."

Paul Collingwood passed a fitness Test on his left thigh on Thursday morning but Glen Chapple's abdominal strain makes him a doubt.

After the 38-run victory in Belfast, the England squad flew to Southampton on Wednesday.

The match takes place at the same venue where England beat Australia by 100 runs last year in their first ever Twenty20 international.

ERRATUM

In Star Sport's issue of June 15, mistakenly both in the report under heading 'The local World Cup' and the caption BRAC Bank's managing director was named as Imran Ahmed. Actually his name is Imran Rahman. We regret the slip.

Sports Editor

Pakistan to play WI this winter

REUTERS, Karachi

West Indies will play three Tests and five one-day internationals in Pakistan in November and December, a Pakistan Cricket Board official said Thursday.

"The tour is confirmed, however the itinerary will be finalised later due to some logistical reasons," PCB official Subhan Ahmed told Reuters.

Pakistan's efforts to confirm the itinerary will be delayed until the outcome of the ICC Champions Trophy being held in India between October 7 to November 5 becomes clearer.

West Indies have to play in the qualifying rounds of the Trophy from Oct 7 to 14 to make the main rounds for which Pakistan are seeded.

West Indies' last tour was in 1997/98 as they refused to play in Pakistan in 2002 because of security reasons in the wake of the Sept. 11 incident. That series was shifted to Sharjah.

Farveez thinks the world of Sri Lanka

AFP, Southampton

Sri Lanka's new generation of cricketers will have re-established the island as a force in the one-day game in time for next year's World Cup in the West Indies, all-rounder Farveez Maharoof believes.

Ten years after their famous World Cup triumph, Sri Lanka have slipped to sixth in the one-day rankings as coach Tom Moody attempts to blend young talent with established performers like Muttiah Muralitharan, Mahela Jayawardene and Chaminda Vaas.

A battling 1-1 series draw with England in the just completed Test series has lifted spirits and Sri Lanka head into a five-match one-day series against their hosts in confident mood.

"We are all aware that we are in this rebuilding phase and we have to be patient," Maharoof admitted.

South Americans

FROM PAGE 21

world class side but not invulnerable...with our passionate fans behind us anything is possible and we have to reward them with a fully committed performance," added midfielder Albert Nadi.

By contrast, Argentina's squad - who suffered similar bickering when they failed to get beyond the first round in 2002 and recorded their worst World Cup performance in 40 years - appear to be fit, united and focused.

"We must be thinking of collecting three points," said full back Roberto Ayala, one of Argentina's best performers last week.

"We must draw out the best of the strengths we showed against Ivory Coast."

The experienced striking duo of Sevilla's Javier Saviola and Chelsea's Hernan Crespo were ruthless up front, making the most of only a handful of chances against the West Africans.

"Serbia won't be as physically strong, but they have players who are technically very accomplished," cautioned midfielder Pablo Aimar.

The Argentinians are conscious that with Mateja Kezman, Dejan Stankovic, and Savo Milosevic, their opponents can still rival their incisive finishing.

"I think that they (Serbia) will play more offensively because they lost the first game, they have to win the second one," said Julio Cruz, who partners Stankovic at Inter Milan.

"Dejan is the most complete kind of player you find in football. But I don't know if he can play for this team the same way as he plays for Inter," he added.

Argentina are aiming to remedy problems with maintaining possession and moving the ball upfield more quickly, which Ayala found was lacking against Ivory Coast.

Pekerman has so far given little idea if he will maintain the measured tactics for the match that could secure Argentina's place among the last 16, despite pressure from the Argentinian media for something more flamboyant.

But with Cruz, Messi and Carlos Tevez - another player once heralded as the next Maradona - on hand and raring to play, there is the promise of sparks to come.

Sevilla's Javier Saviola and Chelsea's Hernan Crespo were ruthless up front, making the most of only a handful of chances against the West Africans.

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Standings

| GROUP C | | | | | | | | | |
|----------------|----|---|---|---|----|----|-----|--|--|
| Team | MP | W | D | L | GF | CA | Pts | | |
| Argentina | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 3 | | |
| Netherlands | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 3 | | |
| Ivory Coast | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 0 | | |
| Serbia & Mont. | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | | |

Night is still young



AFP, Hamburg

It's another hot night in St. Pauli. Even without World Cup fever raising temperatures and other things, most nights are sizzling in this party district of sex shops, nightclubs and prostitutes.

Inside the packed restaurants are giant television screens showing every match. Tonight it's Brazil. Or is it Germany? It hardly seems to matter, just a different set of people strolling the streets, waving flags and honking horns.

Visitors from around the world are flocking to the entertainment district of the northern German city of Hamburg where the Beatles discovered the style and sound that excited a generation.

A monument on a side street recalls the 1960's Star Club where the Beatles played, just down the street from Grossen Freiheit 36, where more modern stars have played for more than 20 years.

But it's the sex and neon that steal the eyes these days. Store windows have scantily clad mannequins in suggestive poses sur-

rounded by footballs in a nod to the World Cup, but it's mainly business as usual.

And business is booming. Prostitution is legal in Germany. With thousands of visitors in every city for the 32-nation football festival, the next month offers a chance for brisk global trade.

Just down from the large corner police station, outside a McDonald's, is a row of women wearing all manner of seductive outfits, faux farm girls and tennis stars leaving so little and yet so much to the imagination.

Many of them inquire if visitors would like to come away with them. From kilt-clad curious to those reveling in World Cup victory or trying to console a loss, the sidewalk is busy.

"Why not? Just 30 to watch," says a halter-topped, tight-shorted blonde.

Touching costs more along the Reeperbahn, the street of brothels where visits by women and boys (under 18) are forbidden. Tall metal walls on either end of the street keep out auto traffic and unwelcome guests.

A faded sign lays out the rules. But a group of Hispanic visitors do not notice the signs, strolling along the street with women.

Bikini-clad women from inside

the windows quickly let the newcomers know that competition of any feminine kind is not welcome along this street. The women depart. The men stroll through.

The Anchor and The Other Place, bars at one end of the street, are showing the World Cup. But most nights there are less than a handful of people watching the match alongside the entrance to the department store of sexy women.

Those seeking sport glory look elsewhere in St. Pauli, which is home to a gritty football club with a cult following. But in this area, fantasies of a different sort are on display.

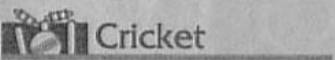
Within the gates, conversations take place. Business is transacted. In the spirit of the World Cup motto, friends are made.

A dominatrix chats on a phone awaiting her next call. Achtung, baby. Don't fear the Reeperbahn.

Out the other side, signs for the SV Hamburg Bundesliga club proclaim this the official path of supporters. A few people crowd around a sports bar. People are spilling out into the streets.

The day's final World Cup match is over. But the night has just started and the matchmaking is far from done.

'It taught me a lot'



AFP, Gros Islet

Brian Lara was celebrating a return to form Thursday after his century in the second innings of the second Test against India saved the West Indies from defeat.

The batting superstar has indicated that his 120 in the drawn second Test at the Beausejour Cricket Ground has taught him a different side of his batting that he hopes to explore in the future.

"My batting is an attacking style, where I look to get out there and dominate, and I have set up more victories than I have saved matches, but this innings was different," Lara, Test cricket's highest scorer, told reporters.

"This innings taught me a lot about my batting. It has taught me that in the first innings of a Test match, I need to be in a similar mood."

"I need to consolidate and ensure that the team benefits from something long from me."

"In the first Test in Antigua, we led



a few boundaries and I was out of it quite quickly, so I have learnt a lot out of this innings."

"We are very buoyant that we are still level and no side has drawn blood in this series, so we are looking forward to the next 10 days of cricket," he said.

Now he is looking forward to playing on better batting surfaces in St Kitts and Jamaica, to negate the punishing effect of India's superior spin bowlers.

The West Indies captain, who hails from Trinidad, said he had drawn inspiration from his country's excellent start at soccer's World Cup in Germany when they held Sweden to a 0-0 draw.

"Watching the Soca Warriors, they had to battle 90 minutes for a draw. We had 98 overs to do it. That was the reason why we got out there and tried to do it," Lara said.

"We knew that we could not win the game, we just had to survive. The gods smiled on us yesterday, we had a free day and it was nice to see us survive," Lara added.

Rain washed out the fourth day's play in St Lucia, with Lara, Test cricket's leading run scorer, resuming his innings on 15 not out.

"I wasn't concentrating on a hundred. I just thought I needed to bat as long as possible and the first two-and-a-half hours before lunch were very vital," the record-breaking left-hander said.

Germans rejoice late relief

FROM PAGE 28

exploded at the end. It was one of the nicest moments in my brief managerial career.

"We want to finish top of the group now and treat the 80,000 fans in Berlin."

"We will enjoy this win and focus on Ecuador from tomorrow onwards," Klinsmann said. "We want to finish top of this group and play in stadiums we have got used to."

If Germany top the group then they will play their last 16 match in Munich, where they defeated Costa Rica 4-2 in their first match.

"We believe in this team. We need wins to get the people behind us and then the trust will grow from game to game," Klinsmann declared.

"We have a lot of respect for Ecuador but we want to beat them and give the 80,000 fans in Berlin a treat."

As well as setting up the ideal venue for the next phase Klinsmann may also be thinking of potential second round opponents with England, Paraguay and Sweden battling out for two qualifying spots in Group B.

After beating Paraguay 1-0, England are favourites to top the group, and if Germany can do the same, they will avoid their arch rivals in the knockout phase.

But Klinsmann says the three-time winners fear no team.

"I think there are a lot of good teams in this tournament," Klinsmann said. "Argentina made a good impression against Ivory Coast and everyone is talking about them."

"But from our point of view this World Cup is in our country and I think we can hold our own against

anyone. We will go for it."

"We knew from the beginning that we needed to show a lot of dedication and get the talent out of this team. I think we are doing that."

Meanwhile, the Poland players felt that the dismissal of Radoslaw Sobolewski 15 minutes from time was unjustified and was the key to Germany's victory on Wednesday.

"I certainly don't think it deserved a second yellow," keeper Artur Boruc told reporters.

"It also looked like the German player deliberately left his foot in. That (red card) was probably decisive although even then we thought we could hold out."

"The annoying thing is even after the red card we had managed to hold them," said left back Michal Zewlakow.

BITS AND BOBS

No family ties

AFP, Berlin

US World Cup coach Bruce Arena has family ties to Italy but very little links the 54-year-old manager to the homeland of the team his squad faces Saturday at Kaiserslautern in a Group E match.

"The Italian heritage, that's my only connection," Arena said. "I've only been there three times in my life."

Arena's late grandparents were from Italy, his mother Sicilian and father from Napoli. Arena said he likely has distant blood relatives somewhere in Italy but has never sought them out.

Is there nothing else tying him to Italy?

"I like pasta." Elephant mums

AFP, Berlin

The mothers of Ivory Coast's squad, nicknamed "the elephants", have brought out a song to "encourage" their offspring. The French and local vernacular clip is getting regular play on the RTT public television station and propagates a new dance "style" -- the "mama jump," a version of the winged, hands-outstretched, run players often set off on when scoring.

Robcop

AFP, Berlin

Hundreds of robots from 36 countries in 440 teams are taking part in the robot World Cup "Robocup" in the northern city of Bremen.

The event is expected to draw some 20,000 fans through to Sunday as the robots go through their paces -- perhaps trying their own take on the Peter Crouch "robot" dance.

The categories are less than 18 centimetres (7 inches) and medium (up to 50 cm). Some compete on four legs and others on two in the "humanoid" version.

The Germans from the Free University of Berlin hope their team can retain its title in the small category having won the last edition in Japan.

The juggler

AFP, Berlin

Alejandro Trujillo of Mexico still has the old ball skills at 70 as he attends his 12th World Cup. The father of three, who are at the tournament with him, will give a half-time juggling exhibition when Mexico face Portugal next week in Gelsenkirchen. He also wants to set a world record in Madrid next week by walking 20 kilometres -- the current record is 15 -- with five others, all juggling a football as they go.

'Don't go broke'

AFP, Cambodia

Gambling-mad Cambodians were Thursday warned by Prime Minister Hun Sen not to hook their worldly possessions for the sake of the World Cup.

"If you want to bet on the football matches, just bet with your mouth. Don't sell your cow, motorbike, car, house, or land and go to bet," he told villagers at a ceremony in impoverished northwestern Cambodia.

The World Cup is being broadcast across the country and illegal bookies abound for punters who make, and lose, fortunes on single games.

Cambodian gamblers are notorious for putting money down on anything, from sporting events to the amount of rain that might fall in an afternoon.

Stories of wagers gone horribly wrong are fodder for the Cambodian press, with gambling-induced suicides and murders frequently making headlines.

The premier himself acknowledged calling the wrong outcome after predicting that Japan would trounce Australia.

"The ball is round -- we cannot predict which way it will roll," he said, without indicating if he had wagered any money.