

ICC worry over costly WC

PTI, Dubai

International Cricket Council's Chief Executive Malcolm Speed has expressed concerns about the spiralling costs involved in travelling to see the World Cup in the Caribbean next March.

"The five-star hotels are very expensive. I hope when I go back there in August to the quarterly board meeting of the Cricket World Cup organising committee, then we'll have some good news," Speed said.

Speed said the cost for media personnel was of particular concern -- they would have to spend about 50 nights in the Caribbean to cover the whole event.

"At my first ICC meeting in 1997, the ICC members granted the World Cup to West Indies. I remember thinking at the time, that's a very brave decision, I'll watch with interest the World Cup in 2007, without realising I would be Chief Executive at that time," the Australian said.

"There are nine islands involved, so nine grounds and 20 practice venues are being built for major matches. They are all being funded by the various governments of the West Indies so they're all right behind it.

"I think it will have a particularly West Indian flavour and I think it will be great fun." But he said there remained other areas of concern.

"We have to get through another hurricane season over the next three or four months -- some of the grounds have had problems with hurricanes." Speed said that choosing to schedule the event in March and April coincided with peak holiday season - thereby adding to the prices. "(But) it's the safest time for us to play because later on we run into the rainy season."

Greenidge replaces Carew

BBC ONLINE, undated

Former Test batsman Gordon Greenidge has been appointed as the new convenor of selectors by the West Indies.

Greenidge replaces Joey Carew, who decided not to stand for re-election for another two-year term.

Clyde Butts also retains his place on the panel and another West Indies Test great, Andy Roberts, will join him and Greenidge.

Current captain Brian Lara and coach Bennett King will also be given a full role at selection meetings.

Lara recently threatened to resign after a difference of opinion with the selectors during a home series against India.

He was made a selector for the series in May, but claimed he was only told about the decision on the eve of the final Test.

"It's so important everyone involved - the selectors, the public, the administrators, the cricketers - have all got to be moving in the same direction and not fighting each other if we want to move forward," Lara told BBC Sport earlier this week.

The changes to the selection panel are likely to mean that he will stay on in the job, with the main task of moulding the team into a competitive unit before next year's World Cup in the Caribbean.

Yousuf leads

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Sami's exit meant Pakistan, also without crooked batsmen Shoaib Malik (elbow) and vice-captain Younis Khan (knee), now had senior strokeplayers Yousuf and Inzamam in together on a good pitch.

Inzamam got of the mark with an off-driven four against Hoggard before Yousuf treated a packed crowd, enjoying blues skies on a hot day, to a flourishing, wristy, cover-driven boundary off Harmison.

Plunkett, who'd removed opener Imran Farhat late on Friday, almost dismissed Inzamam for 17. But leaping first slip Marcus Trescothick was unable to hold the difficult one-handed chance.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at tea on the third day of the first Test between England and Pakistan at Lord's on Saturday: **ENGLAND:** First innings 528-9 dec (Collingwood 186, Cook 105, Bell 100 no; Kaneria 3-119) **PAKISTAN:** First innings (over-night 66-3) Butt c Strauss b Harmison 10 Farhat b Plunkett 33 Iqbal c Collingwood b Harmison 0 Yousuf not out 132 Sami c Jones b Hoggard 0 Inzamam b Plunkett 69 Razzaq not out 21 Extras: (b-3, lb-11, w-7, nb-5) 26 Total: (For 5 wkts in 79 overs) 291 Fall of wickets: 1-28, 2-28, 3-65, 4-68, 5-241.

To bat: Shahid Afridi, Kamran Akmal, Umar Gul, Danish Kaneria.

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Hoggard	20	1	65	1
Harmison	18	3	63	2
Panesar	22	2	76	0
Plunkett	14	3	50	2
Collingwood	5	1	23	0



PHOTO: AFP

Swedish star Susanna Kallur celebrates after winning the women's 100m hurdle at the IAAF Golden League meeting in Rome on Thursday.

Powell in top form



BBC ONLINE, undated

Asafa Powell's fine form continued at the Golden Gala in Rome as he stormed to victory in the 100m and matched Maurice Greene's meet record time.

The Jamaican, who has won his event in the first two Golden League meetings this term, eased home in 9.85 seconds.

Marion Jones clocked her best time in the 100m for four years in finishing second in a time of 10.91sec.

Jeremy Wariner posted a per-

sonal-best time of 43.62sec in winning the 400m, while Kenenisa Bekele won the 5000m.

Olympic and world champion Wariner overcame up-and-coming American Xavier Carter, who finished second in 44.76sec, while Bekele edged out three challengers in a close finish to his race.

Powell's victory in the 100m means he remains on course for the \$1m (£544,000) Golden League jackpot, awarded to any athlete that wins their event in all six meets in the series.

And the 23-year-old Commonwealth champion brushed off the disappointment of not coming closer to beating the 9.77sec world record time he holds with rival Justin

Gatin.

"I feel pretty good. I am happy with the win even without the record," he said.

"I had a bad start. It was very slow for me. My first 30 meters were slow. But I am satisfied."

Wariner, Ethiopia's Tirunesh Dibaba (in the women's 5,000) and Sanya Richards of the United States (women's 400) are also still in the running for the jackpot.

Jones, meanwhile, was delighted with her run despite finishing behind Jamaican Sherone Simpson in the 100m.

Simpson won in 10.87, but Jones said: "I ran my seasonal best. I am getting motivation I did not have before."

Aussie blow for Germany



AFP, Amsterdam

Australia may have denied Germany a place in the finals by defeating them 2-1 in the women's Champions Trophy field hockey tournament here Saturday.

China defeated New Zealand 4-0 in the earlier game to go to 10 points and an assured berth in the finals.

If Argentina wins over the Netherlands in the last match of the round robin later on Saturday, Germany plays China in the finals and if Netherlands wins over Argentina, Netherlands earns a finals berth.

Germany went into its match against Australia with nine points and by failing to secure the win they have left their fate in the hands of Argentina beating Netherlands.

Bacher against quota system

CRICINFO, undated

The appointment of coloured cricketer Ashwell Prince as captain of South Africa shows that the time has come for the country to do away with the quota system, says Ali Bacher, a veteran sports administrator.

Bacher, who played a vital role in South Africa's staging of the World Cup in 2003, said Prince's appointment would be an inspiration for black men and women in his country.

"There are extraordinary opportunities available for black sportsmen and women in the new democracy," Bacher wrote in a column for BBC Sports.

"And they now know that if you've got the determination, the focus and the potential, you can make it to the top and ultimately captain your country."

Bacher revealed that Prince was identified as a potential leader by Shaun Pollock, former captain, and was confident that Prince would get all the support from his teammates.

"He is highly respected within the team, focused, disciplined and a deep thinker of the game. Shaun thought that if his batting remained consistently good by international standards, he could become the first ever black South African cricket captain."

Bacher, said that although Prince will be up against some tough opposition, he would rise to the occasion.

"They are going to Sri Lanka and touring there is not easy, particularly when you're up against an extraordinary genius like their spin bowler Muttiah Muralitharan. But you watch him play and he's calm and cool under pressure and he did particularly well against the Australians last summer, and you don't get more pressure than that."

Sohail recalled for Champs Trophy



PTI, Karachi

Pakistan have recalled penalty corner specialist Sohail Abbas and centre-half Waseem Ahmed in a 18-member squad for this month's Champions Trophy hockey tournament to be played in Teressa, Spain from July 22 to 30.

Abbas, who has scored a world record of 278 goals, and Waseem Ahmed had come out of retirement earlier this month after hanging their boots following the Lahore edition of Champions Trophy in December 2004.

Voigt wins 13th stage



REUTERS, Montelimar

Jens Voigt of Germany outprinted Spaniard Oscar Pereiro Sio after a 209-km breakaway to win the 13th stage of the Tour de France on Saturday.

Pereiro Sio began the day 46th overall, 28 minutes 50 seconds behind yellow jersey holder, Floyd Landis.

The American was riding in the peloton, 28:39 adrift of Pereiro Sio when he crossed the line.

After five hours 24 minutes and 36 seconds in the saddle, Voigt (CSC) and Pereiro Sio (Caisse d'Epargne) powered away from two other escapees, France's Sylvain Chavanel (Cofidis) and Manuel Quinzato (Liquigas) of Italy.

Chavanel finished third just

ahead of Quinzato, 40 seconds adrift of Voigt.

A fifth member of the breakaway, Ukrainian Andriy Grivko (Milram) dropped off the group in the last of the five fourth-category climbs which punctuated the course, 25 km from the line.

The five riders escaped at the 21-km mark of the Tour's longest stage.

Despite the scorching heat, with temperatures up to 42 degrees Celsius, they pushed themselves along the 230-km stage from the Mediterranean city of Beziers to Montelimar, the gateway to Provence, through the foothills of the Massif Central.

The peloton, deprived of a boss by the retirement of seven-times champion Lance Armstrong and missing contenders German Jan Ullrich and Italian Ivan Basso who were implicated in a Spanish doping probe, let them go.

Malik, Asif fly back home

AFP, London

Injured Pakistan stars Mohammad Asif and Shoaib Malik have flown home from the tour of England as they each try to regain fitness.

Fast bowler Asif and batsman Malik both have elbow injuries and were among several leading Pakistan players who missed the first Test at Lord's, the opening encounter of the four-match npower series.

But while Pakistan tour manager Zaheer Abbas was hopeful Asif could still play a role in the Tests, he ruled Malik out although he was cautiously optimistic that the batsman, who has played county cricket for Gloucestershire, could return in time for the one-day series starting in August.

"Asif and Malik have both flown home to Pakistan," Zaheer told AFP at Lord's on Saturday.

"There is very little chance of Malik playing in the Test series. But he might return for the one-day series.

"Asif wants to go back for some rest and if he gets fit he could be back for the third or fourth Test," Pakistan batting great Zaheer added.

Uncapped paceman Samiullah Niazi has already been summoned as cover and Zaheer said further replacements were on the way to bolster both Pakistan's batting and bowling.

"Taufeeq Umer (opening batsman) and Rao Iftikhar (medium-pacer) are flying to England in the next couple of days," explained Zaheer, who was philosophical about Pakistan's injury crisis.

"Injuries are part and parcel of the game. It's disappointing to lose a bowler like Asif but we can do nothing about it," insisted Zaheer, one of Gloucestershire's overseas stars in the 1970s.

USA sack

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Jurgen Klinsmann, who led hosts Germany to third place at the World Cup, has been mentioned as a possible successor.

He resigned from the Germany post on Wednesday and lives in Southern California with his American wife.

In 2002, Arena sprung a surprise by guiding the US squad to the World Cup quarter-finals, but they were unable to get past the first round in Germany this summer.

Cole hits

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that last season was the worst yet under the Frenchman.

"After Patrick Vieira's departure the decline from invincibility to near-crisis continues," he said.

Cole, who had a good World Cup in Germany, is believed to be a target of Chelsea, Real Madrid and Barcelona.

Hearing went

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meeting," the player's agent, Claudio Vigorelli, told PA Sport. "Everything went fine. He gave his version of what happened."

"He will not have to return to Zurich at a later stage."

Materazzi brought the meeting forward from July 20 due to his impending vacation.

"Marco will fly on Sunday to the Maldives," Vigorelli said.

He then joked, "Do you know where Zidane will spend his holidays? It's just that the Maldives are small islands."

Bell tolls in vain



AFP, London

England batsman Ian Bell admitted he expects to lose his place in the team despite scoring a chanceless hundred in the first Test against Pakistan here at Lord's.

The Warwickshire strokemaker was 100 not out when England declared on 528 for nine on the second day Friday, but was realistic about his role, having only been called in to replace injured all-rounder Andrew Flintoff - who England hope will captain them in their Ashes defence in Australia later this year.

"I saw myself coming in just for this Test match because when Freddie (Flintoff) is fit he plays," said the 24-year-old Bell.

"I've filled his position and I'm very happy that I've shown people I can play at this level."

The compact right-hander explained he expects to be dropped for the second Test, due to start at Flintoff's Old Trafford home ground in Manchester on July 27, despite his impressive knock.

"It will be unusual but I don't see it as a particularly difficult decision," Bell explained as he contemplated the prospect of becoming the first England batsman since Graeme Hick in 1998 to be axed one match after scoring a Test hundred.

Bell brought up his third Test century with a neatly punched drive through mid-wicket, a shot that was typical of his measured 168-ball innings, which included nine fours and lasted 254 minutes.

He scored his first Test century -- and his highest to date -- against

Bangladesh at Chester-le-Street in June 2005, ending on 162 not out, while his second hundred (115) came against Pakistan in Faisalabad late last year.

"I really enjoyed going out there and getting a hundred at Lord's and I would love to do it again," said Bell.

"I want to succeed at this level and play hard but I have to learn not to put too much pressure on myself to score runs and just go out there and enjoy it."

Bell added he felt he had enhanced his chances of getting into the England squad for the Ashes series.

"It's quite a distance away and I didn't go into this match thinking about it," he explained.

"But I've not done myself any harm by going out and getting a hundred."

FED CUP

Li, Zheng star for China



AFP, Beijing

China took a big step towards joining the elite Fed Cup World Group for the first time on Saturday when Wimbledon heroines Li Na and Zheng Jie established a 2-0 play-off lead over Germany.

Li, 24, who became the first Chinese player to reach a Grand Slam quarter-final this month, eased past Kristina Barrois 6-3, 6-4 in 74 minutes.

Zheng, who claimed China's first Wimbledon title with doubles partner Yan Zi, beat Kathrin Woerle 6-4,

7-5.

Li said her confidence had been boosted by her performance in London, where Kim Clijsters eventually ousted her.

"I was playing at home and after Wimbledon my confidence increased a lot. Every match I try my best to win," said Li.

She added that the Fed Cup play-off was more important than the WTA tour, because she was "playing for her nation, not for herself".

Barrois, ranked 129 to Li's 22, questioned the quality of the refereeing which she said favoured the Chinese player.

"I think I played not bad but Li

played very well," said Barrois.

"I think the referee was not on my side. Li was playing at home, and it was not easy for me. But I did my best."

Meanwhile Zheng recovered from 4-2 down in the first set to beat Woerle, ranked more than 100 places below her at 154th, earning the winning break at 6-5 in the second.

"I didn't play very aggressive and she was a very good player. She served well and she took her chance."

Entry into the eight-nation World Group would mark another success for China whose women have been making great strides in recent years.



PHOTO: AFP

COOLING DOWN: Spanish tennis player Anabel Medina holds an ice bag on her head during the first match of the Fed Cup semifinals against Italy on Friday.

Fall of the Old Lady

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The scandal will lead to a mass exodus of top players from the three relegated clubs.

"I don't know if I'm going to stay with Juventus," said Azzuri goalkeeper Gianluigi Buffon before Sunday's World Cup final.

AC Milan midfielder Gennaro Gattuso said: "Giving an amnesty to the guilty parties in this scandal would be unfair and disappointing to millions of fans awaiting these sentences."

Faced with the damning evidence of hours of criminal investigators' wiretaps implicating key figures, the clubs' lawyers argued that the transcripts were misinterpreted or taken out of context.

Former Italian football federation official Paolo Bergamo, who had responsibility for referee selection, for instance, is overheard telling a match official: "Try to be on the right wave length."

Absent, however, from the

tribunal was Moggi, who was overheard telling Pierluigi Pairetto, the head of the Italian referees' association, which match officials he wanted assigned to certain league and European games.

Moggi's lawyer Paolo Trofino reiterated demands last week that he could not be tried as he had resigned from the club.

He said the transcripts were worthless in light of the massive number of phone calls -- 420 to 430 per day -- made by "the man with a thousand contacts" among journalists, officials and politicians.

"In total, one could estimate at 100,000 the telephone calls made by my client during that season. And you know how many conversations the police have used to come to their conclusions? They have used 40," he said.

"His innocence is contained in the other 99,960 phone calls that have not been put forward."

Gaudio out of Swiss Open

REUTERS, Gstaad

Defending champion Gaston Gaudio and top seed Ivan Ljubicic both suffered quarterfinal defeats at the Swiss Open on Friday.

Second seed Gaudio was beaten 3-6 2-6 by 20-year-old Richard Gasquet of France, while Ljubicic succumbed 7-6 6-3 to Spanish sixth seed Feliciano Lopez.

Croatian Ljubicic was playing his second match of the day, having earlier come from behind to defeat Swiss wildcard Marco Chiudinelli 6-7 6-3 6-2 in the second round.

Lopez also had to play twice and completed a 6-7 6-3 7-6 second-round win over fellow Spaniard Ruben Ramirez Hidalgo in a match that was interrupted by rain on Thursday night.

"I already came from a set down in the morning, but again I wasn't able to win the tie-break in the second match," the hard-hitting Ljubicic told reporters.