

## First Div Cricket transfers today

SPORTS REPORTER

Players' transfers for this season's First Division Cricket League will begin at the Bangabandhu National Stadium today.

A total of twenty teams are expected to participate in the bourse which will run till January 26.

Last year's Second Division promoted teams Sadharan Bima and BKSP are the additions to this year's competition along with Premier League's relegated sides Agrani Bank and Orient Club.

## Sidhu given reprieve

AFP, New Delhi

India's Supreme Court decided Tuesday to stay the imprisonment of cricketer-turned-politician Navjot Singh Sidhu, sentenced to three years in jail for killing a man in an outburst of road rage.

The ruling, which means Sidhu is a free man until his appeal against the sentence is heard, also means he can seek re-election to parliament as an MP representing the Sikh pilgrimage city of Amritsar next month, the Press Trust of India said.

After his conviction in December, Sidhu had resigned his seat "on moral grounds", but said Tuesday he intended to re-enter parliament even though his legal woes were far from over.

In addition to his pending appeal, relatives of the victim are also demanding that his sentence be increased.

The case against the flamboyant Sidhu dates back to 1988 when he dragged an elderly man out of his car and showered him with blows after a road accident.

## Shabbir on way to South Africa

AFP, Port Elizabeth

Pakistan captain Inzamamul Haq said Monday that fast bowler Shabbir Ahmed was on his way to South Africa as a replacement after serving a one-year ban for having an illegal bowling action.

But Inzamam refused to confirm a report from Pakistan that injured fast bowler Shoaib Akhtar had been fined after a public confrontation with coach Bob Woolmer during the second Test in Port Elizabeth.

"It is an internal team matter," said Inzamam. He also said a final decision would only be taken Monday night about Shoaib and fellow injured bowler Umar Gul returning home. "We'll decide tonight. The doctor's report is coming and then we will decide."

## Anxious hours

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injury while the experienced Tapash Baisya and rookie Dollar Mahmud are also in consideration. In that case the axe will fall on all-rounder Forhad Reza and left-arm pacer Syed Raseel.

The team will be officially announced tomorrow.

## Mohammedan

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**BIMAN:** 134 all out in 43.3 overs (Javed 14, Raqibul 9, Mosharrarf 14, Nafis 15, Jahur 0, Sanwar 19, Farhad 1, Sajjad 9, Murad 11, Raseel 2, Moshred 1, extras 39, Dipolaj 1-35, Azim 3-46, Rezaul 5-17, Rashad 1-9).

**PARTEX:** 138-5 in 42.2 overs (Aslam 8, Rajin 51, Tariq 6, Rafiquei 7, Neeeyamur 0, Rashed 48 n.o., Rezaul 8 n.o., extras 10, Raseel 1-21, Moshred 2-20, Murad 1-32).

**Result: Partex won by five wickets.**

## Vaidisova sets

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through, it feels great," she said. "It's great for Czech tennis to have two quarter-finalists, one in the semis. Of course you don't want to play your friend but I'm just happy I got through it."

## Sinking feeling

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felt bad for the way I was playing. You know, he didn't want to show me up or something.

"We won't talk about the match. We talk about what 25-year-olds talk about, I guess.

"We never really talk about tennis until right before. We had a joke or two right before we were walking out on the court, then it's business. We're both professionals."

## Serena not egotistic

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the tennis court in the process of eliminating highly-rated 11th seed Jelena Jankovic.

"When I go out to play I like to go to the person's stronger side," she said.

"I guess it makes me feel macho or something that if I beat them going to their backhand or whatever, their stronger side, it makes me feel extra awesome.

"But I just wanted to get the match over with and not have to show off too much."

# Gibbs trial today



AFP, London

Herschelle Gibbs's appeal against a two Test match-ban imposed upon the South Africa batsman for "racially offensive" comments during the first Test against Pakistan, will be heard on Wednesday via teleconference, the International Cricket Council (ICC) said in a statement issued from its Dubai headquarters on Monday.

Gibbs's case will be heard by Richie Benaud, now one of cricket's most well-known broadcasters, in the former Australia captain's capacity as an ICC appeals commissioner.

The teleconference will also involve Gibbs, his legal representative, ICC match referee Chris Broad and a legal representative acting on his behalf. The global governing body's in-house lawyer Urvasi Naidoo will also be present on the call in an administrative capacity.

Benaud, under the terms of the appeals procedure, has seven days in which to hear and determine the appeal.

As his appointment was confirmed on January 18, the appeal

will be processed before the Friday start of the third Test between South Africa and Pakistan in Cape Town.

Benaud has complete discretion to increase, reduce, amend or



HERSCHELLE GIBBS

substitute the original verdict and his decision is final and binding.

The ICC's announcement came after Pakistan levelled the series at 1-1 earlier Monday with a five-wicket win in the second Test in Port Elizabeth.

Gibbs was found guilty of a Level 3 offence under the ICC code of conduct which prohibits using "any language or gestures that offends,

insults, humiliates, intimidates, threatens, disparages or vilifies another person on the basis of that person's race, religion, colour, descent or national or ethnic origin."

The charge, laid by ICC chief executive Malcolm Speed, relates to an incident that took place shortly before the lunch interval on the fourth day of the first Test in Centurion earlier this month, when Gibbs's comments regarding Pakistan supporters were overheard through a stump microphone on the ground.

At a hearing conducted by Broad after the Test, which South Africa won by seven wickets, Gibbs apologised for his remarks but pleaded not guilty to the ICC charge.

Conflicting reports of the incidents, which led to Gibbs's remarks, have been published in South African newspapers.

The three spectators, who were moved from seats near the boundary after allegedly swearing at bowler Paul Harris, claim Harris swore at them.

But other spectators say the Pakistani supporters were abusive and made watching the game unpleasant for people sitting near them.

# Inzy hails 'best' victory



AFP, Port Elizabeth

Pakistan captain Inzamamul Haq hailed Monday's five-wicket win in the second Test against South Africa at St George's Park as the best of his captaincy career.

"It is not easy for sub-continent teams to win in South Africa," he said. "It is the biggest win for me as captain."

The win, with a day to spare, levelled the series which will be decided in the third and final Test starting at Newlands in Cape Town Friday.

Inzamam was named man of the match for his unbeaten 92 in the first innings which gave Pakistan a crucial lead of 141 after South Africa were bowled out for 124 on the first day. But he said the credit belonged to the team.

He singled out Younis Khan and Kamran Akmal, who came together when Pakistan were a shaky 92 for five in their second innings and took them to the victory target of 191 with an unbeaten partnership of 99. Younis made 67 not out and Akmal 57 notout.

"Definitely we were under pressure (with five down) but they played very well, especially Younis as the senior partner," said Inzamam.

He also praised opening bowler Mohammad Asif, playing in his eighth Test, who took five for 76 in 38 overs in the second innings when Pakistan were reduced to three front-line bowlers following an injury to first

innings destroyer Shoaib Akhtar.

"He has bowled very well, moving the ball both ways. We are very happy that a new boy has bowled with his control," said Inzamam.

South African captain Graeme Smith said his team lost the match when they were bowled out cheaply on the first day.

"We played some very good cricket to keep ourselves in the game as long as we did and to give ourselves a chance to win."

The loss ended a streak of three successive wins by South Africa. "Pakistan deserved their victory. They were ahead from day one."

Younis played a solid innings apart from a difficult caught and bowled chance low down to Shaun Pollock when he had five, while Akmal batted aggressively.

Akmal's first three boundaries, all off Pollock, flew off edges through the slips cordons. Two went between second slip and gully. When Smith moved the gully fielder to third slip, Akmal edged the ball where gully had been.

"That was very frustrating but these things happen in cricket," said Smith. "Once he got to 25 or 30 he played brilliantly. They needed someone to take the game by the scruff of the neck and he did that."

Akmal hurried to his half-century off 61 balls with five more fours. What had been a tense contest ended shortly before tea with a flurry of strokes.

South African hopes were raised when Pakistan, needing 191 to win, were three down with only 48 runs scored.

# Pak greats salute win



AFP, Karachi

Former cricket greats Tuesday hailed Pakistan's comeback win over South Africa, a victory described as the "best ever" by captain Inzamamul Haq.

Led admirably by Inzamam, Pakistan achieved a comprehensive five-wicket win over Graeme Smith-led Proteas on the fourth day of the second Test at Port Elizabeth on Monday to level the three-match series at 1-1.

Vice-captain Younis Khan and wicketkeeper Kamran Akmal hit contrasting unbeaten half-centuries to take Pakistan to the challenging 191-run target.

Pakistan lost the first Test at Centurion by seven wickets.

"A win is a win and to have achieved that on foreign soil adds to the achievement," said former Pakistan captain Javed Miandad.

"The difference between Australia and other teams is that they learn lessons from their wins and try to improve with every match. Pakistan must also analyse how the win was achieved," said Miandad, who has also coached Pakistan.

This becomes Pakistan's second only Test win in South Africa after they won at Durban in 1998.

Miandad said Pakistan would have to lift their game to clinch the third Test starting at Cape Town from Friday to achieve their first-ever series win in South Africa.

Pakistan will be without their two frontline pacemen Shoaib Akhtar and Umar Gul who are returning home injured. Akhtar, who took 4-36 to knock down South Africa for a low score of 124 in the first innings, tore his hamstring muscle and needed two weeks' rest.

Akhtar did not bowl in the second innings and is also feared to have recurred an injury to his knee, operated last year.

Gul twisted his ankle during the warm-up match leading up to the first Test and has not recovered since.

Miandad described Inzamam's unbeaten 92 which helped Pakistan gain an invaluable 141-

run lead as "incredible."

"Inzamam played very well and he scored runs with tail-enders in company which shows a great character."

Another former captain and coach Intikhab Alam said Inzamam led the team from the front.

"Akhtar gave Pakistan a very good start and to me dismissing South Africa for 124 was the turning point and then Inzamam handled his attack minus Akhtar admirably," said Alam, who also coached Punjab team in neighbouring India.

Alam said the victory would be a great morale booster for Pakistan.

"I rated Pakistan as the better team than South Africa and now Pakistan is in a good position to win the series, an achievement which they can take into the World Cup in two months," said Alam, who was coach-cum-manager of Pakistan when they won their only title in Australia in 1992.

Pakistan also play five one-day internationals against South Africa next month before heading to the West Indies for the World Cup in March-April.

However former England batsman Woolmer told AFP in an email from Port Elizabeth, South Africa, where Pakistan won the second Test on Monday, that he was still committed to his current job.

"I am only going to make a decision after the World Cup and how to guide Pakistan to World Cup success is the only thing I think about these days," Woolmer said.

Woolmer, who played 19 Tests for England in 1970s, said he had several options available after his contract with Pakistan expires two months after the World Cup.

"I am not committing myself into anything before.

"There is always speculation



PHOTO: AFP

**CALLING FOR HELP?** West Indies captain Brian Lara speaks on his mobile phone prior to the start of a training session at the Barabati Stadium in Cuttack on Tuesday.

## WI sweat

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Asked about the battering order, David replied that it would be based on the situation. In the first game, Sachin Tendulkar and Mahendra Singh Dhoni were promoted ahead of him. "It all depends on the start and the situation of the game. There is nothing fixed about the line-up."

The game will be played under lights, and there's a feeling the dew could prove to be a factor. "The dew will be a factor but how much we don't know. The locals were saying that there was a lot of dew the day before but not much yesterday (Monday). We have to manage in whichever way we can."

Would India prefer chasing because of the dew factor? "We do not have a problem with either chasing or setting a target," David said. "I don't decide whether we have to chase or bat first. We look at the wicket and decide what will be the best thing to do on that wicket. We will see the wicket tomorrow (Wednesday). It looks a bit dry today (Tuesday) but we will see how it is on match day after probably some watering and rolling today (Tuesday)."

David also announced that Sourav Ganguly, who didn't take the field in the West Indian innings on Sunday, was fit and will play on Wednesday. Ganguly had a strap around his left elbow in the nets session but looked pretty fluent while batting, and confident enough to ask the fastest nets bowler to have a go at him. Sachin Tendulkar added to the authenticity by indicating to the bowler that he should bowl bouncers, and the way Ganguly nudged the bat is good news for India.

### TEAMS

**INDIA** (from): Rahul Dravid (captain), Sachin Tendulkar, Ajit Agarkar, Mahendra Dhoni, Gautam Gambhir, Sourav Ganguly, Harbhajan Singh, Joginder Sharma, Dinesh Karthik, Zaheer Khan, Ramesh Powar, Suresh Raina, Rudra Pratap Singh, Shanthakumaran Sreesanth, Robin Uthappa.

**WEST INDIES** (from): Brian Lara (captain), Ian Bradshaw, Dwayne Bravo, Shivnarine Chanderpaul, Rayad Emrit, Chris Gayle, Runako Morton, Daren Powell, Denesh Ramdin, Marlon Samuels, Lendl Simmons, Dwayne Smith, Devon Smith, Jerome Taylor.

## Forever a Czech

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mix of both. So you're definitely influenced by it a little bit, yeah, for sure," said the Madonna fan.

"(But) Everywhere I have a Czech mind. It's not like when I go to Asia I try to change to my Asian mind, then I use my Australian mind.

"You feel the influence, so you have different points maybe a little bit. You have different views, maybe more views because you see it from both sides.

"Yeah, I'm definitely influenced by America, but still keeping my one Czech mind."

## Men's semifinal

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before. She's definitely a great champion. I expect a tough match from her," she said.

Roddick was in a class of his own in a mis-match against his former room-mate Fish in an all-American clash.

The sixth seed made just four errors in the entire match as Fish self-destructed with a flurry of volleying errors.

"I've made that many errors in the first game of a match before so I thought I played pretty well today and I'm excited to be through to the semis," Roddick said.

"I feel fine physically and I'll be ready to go in the semis."

The other quarterfinals are played on Wednesday.

# NY can't host cricket

CRICINFO, undated

Contrary to reports at the weekend, it is highly unlikely that a planned one-day series between India and Australia in North America will be able to include matches in the USA.

At present, there are no venues in the country approved by the ICC to host a one-day international.

In fact, there are none even close to being recognised.

While Canada might conceivably host a few games at the quaintly named Cricket, Skating and Curling Club, the failure of Project USA -- which was intended to develop the US market -- has set the game back in the continent at least until 2008.

A new deal between the largely dysfunctional USA Cricket Association, whose utter inability to run the game led to its suspension by the ICC, and a marketing company called Centrex should give cricket in the USA a commercial stability hitherto absent. But it won't happen in time for this series.

To many -- mainly the marketing men who so dominate the way cricket is run -- the USA remains the untapped Holy Grail. Crack that, so the thinking goes, and the rewards are almost unlimited. Millions of dollars of income -- up to \$6 million per game for up to seven matches - - was touted as a likely reward for the venture. Up to 10 million first-generation Asians make for a

lucrative market, even if the average American doesn't care one jot for the game.

There are three main centres in the USA -- New York, Florida and California. The speculation over the Australia-India series centred on New York, but there is not a venue there that could host a match. There was talk that an NFL stadium might be used, but that shows the lack of credibility of the reports. The major NFL stadiums are astroturf, and even if the organisers laid an artificial wicket, such a surface would not be approved for an ODI. There is one other minor detail. NFL pitches are far too narrow.

That leaves baseball grounds, and only one -- the Mets' Shea Stadium -- could conceivably be used. However, the cricket season in New York runs slap bang in the middle of the baseball season, so that's not an option. And drop-in pitches are not a short-term solution as there are strict rules about transportation of soil and grass across state lines. The raw materials available in New York are just not good enough.

With that in mind, California has been earmarked as the ideal centre for the game, with the right climate and good soil. In the short-term, the venue at Burbank is the nearest to being ready. There are two grounds in Florida -- at Fort Lauderdale and Broward County -- but neither has

pitches nearly good enough for international matches. The grass pitches they have crumble too easily. One expert told Cricinfo that soil with the right amount of clay needed to be imported, probably from Georgia, and that meant a mountain of red tape to be overcome before the project could even start.

When Andy Atkinson, the ICC's pitches guru, was consulted by the bosses of Project USA, he estimated that with the right soil and the will, a pitch could be laid and ready in around eight or nine months. Australia and India's commitments mean that the only spare dates for a North American series is June, and there is no way on earth that any grounds in the USA could be ready by then. As the flamboyant boxing promoter Don King loves to say: "it's got two chances ... slim and none, and slim just left town."

That leaves the one ICC-approved venue in Toronto, which hosted several one-day series in the late 1990s. It offers a foothold on North American soil, but a long series there would have limited appeal, and it's the USA not Canada that whets the two boards' appetites. In terms of TV coverage, they might as well play in some more established neutral centres such as Kuala Lumpur or Sharjah.

# Kiwis off the mark

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Vettori then turned the screws by claiming the vital wickets of Paul Collingwood (10) and Flintoff in quick succession with his cunning variation.

Flintoff had seen his side home in a tense run chase against the Black Caps a week earlier and had bowled superbly during the New Zealand innings with 4-21.

But he succumbed to a rush of blood, charging down the wicket at Vettori and getting a thin edge through to wicketkeeper Brendon McCullum, who claimed the catch at the second attempt.

England was 5-92 and, with Flintoff gone for nine, in deep trouble.

Oram capped a man-of-the-match performance by removing Paul Nixon cheaply, before Mark Gillespie leapt high to drag in an outstanding catch to remove Joyce (47) from the bowling of Vettori and seal England's fate, as they were 7-107.

Unlike Sunday's game against Australia, the Kiwis did not miss a chance in the field; while England only had two batsmen score more than 10.

Earlier, Oram's 86 was the backbone of the New Zealand total as he celebrated his recall with his highest score in one-day internationals.

The big man faced just 89 balls, hitting six fours and two sixes.

They were like chalk and cheese in their approach, but Oram and McCullum put on 120 for the sixth wicket after coming together at 5-67.

McCullum was content to work singles and turn the strike over to his partner, while Oram made light of his recent lack of cricket with some powerful strokes.

New Zealand were in early trouble against some disciplined England bowling, particularly by Flintoff, who maintained his pace at around 150kph.

Fleming's form slump continued when he fell in Flintoff's first over for 20 and his dismissal sparked a collapse.

Collingwood took catches to

remove Peter Fulton (24) and Ross Taylor (15) and trapped Craig McMillan lbw for just two.

McCullum then joined Oram and the pair set about rebuilding the New Zealand innings.

### SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard in the triangular one-day series match between New Zealand and England at the Adelaide Oval on Tuesday:

#### NEW ZEALAND

Fleming c Nixon b Flintoff	20			
Astle c Collingwood b Anderson	1			
Fulton c Collingwood b Lewis	24			
Taylor c Collingwood b Panesar	15			
McMillan lbw Collingwood	2			
Oram c Strauss b Anderson	86			
McCullum b Flintoff	30			
Franklin run out	14			
Vettori c Nixon b Flintoff	2			
Bond b Flintoff	2			
Gillespie not out	1			
Extras: (b-2, lb-3, w-6, nb-2)	13			
Total: (All out in 50 overs)	210			
Fall of wickets: 1-5, 2-37, 3-55, 4-61, 5-67, 6-187, 7-191, 8-194, 9-196, 10-210.				
<b>Bowler</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>W</b>
Lewis	10	1	31	1
Anderson	10	2	47	2
Flintoff	10	2	21	4
Collingwood	8	0	40	1
Panesar	9	0	44	1
Dalrymple	3	0	22	0

<b>ENGLAND</b>	
Strauss lbw b Franklin	19
Loye c Fleming b Franklin	8
Bell c Fleming b Franklin	2
Joyce c Gillespie b Vettori	47
Collingwood lbw b Vettori	10
Flintoff c McCullum b Vettori	9
Nixon c McCullum b Oram	6
Dalrymple c Fleming b Vettori	0
Lewis c Fleming b Bond	5
Panesar c Astle b Bond	6
Anderson not out	0
Extras: (lb-5, w-1, nb-2)	8
Total: (All out in 37.5 overs)	120
Fall of wickets: 1-21, 2-30, 3-31, 4-76, 5-92, 6-107, 7-107, 8-107, 9-120, 10-120.	

**Result: New Zealand won by 90**

runs.

**Man-of-the-match: Jacob Oram**

**Umpires: Daryl Harper (AUS), Ian Howell (RSA)**

### STANDINGS

Standings in the triangular one-day series after New Zealand beat England on Tuesday (played, won, lost, bonus points, points):

Australia	4	4	0	2	18
New Zealand	4	1	3	1	5
England	4	1	3	0	4