

Wright could head Aussie academy

PTI, Melbourne

Former India cricket coach John Wright is all set to take over as the head coach of Australia's Centre of Excellence.

According to a report in the 'Sydney Morning Herald', Wright is set to fill the post left vacant by Tim Nielsen, who took over as Australia's coach after the World Cup.

The Christchurch-based Wright will now be required to move to Brisbane, where the Centre of Excellence is located, and will be in charge of Australia's A team, the newspaper reported.

Wright, who was India's coach before Greg Chappell, was earlier tipped to take over as Pakistan's coach and had even travelled there to meet PCB officials before the World Cup.

The 52-year-old played 82 Tests for New Zealand before starting his coaching career.

DVT hits Lehmann

AFP, Sydney

Former Australia Test batsman Darren Lehmann has been diagnosed with deep vein thrombosis and will undergo blood-thinning therapy, his South Australia state sidesaid Tuesday.

The South Australian Cricket Association (SACA) said Lehmann's condition was picked up during a routine check-up following surgery on a damaged Achilles tendon.

"It has been identified early and Darren will undergo blood-thinning treatment for the next three months," SACA physiotherapist John Portersaid.

Porter said Lehmann, 37, who played 27 Tests and 117 one-day internationals for Australia, was expected to be fit for South Australia when the domestic season begins in October.

The left-handed batsman, who has a Test average of 44.95, played his last Test against Pakistan in December 2004.

High alert

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will have their movements shadowed by riot police.

"This is normally a disadvantage, but the fact that Athens has no large boulevards will make it easier to monitor the fans," Stathis said. "In any case, we cannot prevent people from travelling to support their club."

In order to minimise fan movement, the police have asked hoteliers around town to show the match -- aired on state television NET -- on large screens in their bar and restaurant areas.

"The point is to create a stadium atmosphere," the ministry spokesman said.

To prevent a chance encounter between the two teams' supporters, Liverpool fans will be forwarded to the Olympic Stadium on buses whilst Milan fans will travel on the suburban railway.

Fans will also be given coloured bracelets upon landing at Athens International Airport to help staff escort them back in separate groups.

In total, 100 charter flights from Britain and 80 flights from Italy will arrive in Athens until May 24, in addition to regular flights and 106 private jets carrying VIP guests.

The Liverpool and Milan squads arrived on Monday.

In addition to planning the security operation, Greek police brass are in last-minute talks to prevent police unionists from staging a demonstration in Athens on the day of the final to pressure the government on salary increases.

"This mobilisation must not be held...it could blenheim this great sporting event and embarrass our country internationally," said Public Order Minister Vyrion Polydoros.

The union has pledged not to disrupt security plans, with only off-duty officers set to participate in the protest.

LOCAL SNIPPETS

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leaders with 3.5 points after beating Mahmuda Haque in the fourth round. Masud Begum and Hamida Rahman were third with three points.

DIVITT

Palolic Group and Sports World won their respective matches to share the lead in the AB Bank first division table tennis super league. Palolic blanked Combined SC 3-0, Sports World beat TT Academy 3-1 while Dhaka South East TTC won in straight sets against Barna TTC.

BKSP BOXING

The first BKSP Cup boxing competition concluded at BKSP with the hosts winning eight gold medals. City Boxing Club of Rajshahi were second best with two gold, four silver and one bronze while Dhaka, Dinajpur, Khulna and Jahangir Boxing Club (Comilla) won c19ched one gold each.

Over 100 boxers (under-17) from 14 teams took part in the event.

Sonn gravely ill



CRICINFO, undated

Percy Sonn, the president of the ICC, is critically ill in an intensive care unit in Cape Town, according to Cricket South Africa.

His PA, George Hector, told Cricinfo that Sonn had suffered complications after being admitted to the Durbanville clinic in Cape Town on Monday to undergo a minor colon operation. The appointment, Hector added, had been scheduled several months prior to the recent World Cup in the Caribbean.

Sonn, 57, the former president of the United Cricket Board of South Africa (UCB), succeeded Ehsan Mani at the helm of the ICC in June 2006, and immediately announced his intentions to be a "hands-off" president. This declaration was borne out by his low profile during the World Cup; after delivering his speech at the opening ceremony in Jamaica, he returned to South Africa for several

weeks of the 47-day tournament, although that decision may have been attributable to his ill-health.

"This news is extremely upsetting for everyone who knows Percy," Brian Murgatroyd, the ICC's spokesman, told Cricinfo. "Everyone was with him at the



PERCY SONN

World Cup, where he was his usual jolly self, and so to hear this less than a month later is very trou-

bling.

"Percy has given virtually his whole life to cricket," added Murgatroyd. "He started out in administration at his local club in Belville (in Cape Town) because he was virtually the only person at the club who could read and write. He played a major part in the integration of the South African game after apartheid, and was president of the UCB throughout a tumultuous decade. All our thoughts are with his family and wife Sandra at this difficult time."

Sonn's career in cricket administration has been stalked by controversy. In January 2002, as president of the UCB, he caused a public rumpus by overruling the selection of Jacques Rudolph for the New Year Test against Australia, opting instead for Rudolph's black roommate, Justin Ontong. But his most infamous behaviour came at Paarl during the 2003 World Cup, when he drank himself into such a state of inebriation during Holland's match against India that he was reported to have "almost fallen out of his trousers".

Hoggard leaves echoing void



CRICINFO, undated

All the while that Lord's was shrouded by this afternoon's persistent drizzle, the television monitors in the press box were showing replays of a rather more classic encounter between these two sides -- the seismic second-Test tussle at Lord's in 2000, when England won by two wickets after bowling West Indies out for 54 in their second innings.

That was a watershed fixture in more ways than one. For England, in their first home season of the Duncan Fletcher era, defeat would have left them 2-0 down with three matches to play. Instead, the thrill of the chase imbued England with greater determination than they had known for a generation. They went on to win that summer's battle 3-1, regained the Wisden Trophy for the first time in 34 years, and topped that achievement in the winter with twin victories in Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

For West Indies, on the other hand, the game was a less auspicious turning point. Courtney Walsh and the unhittable Curtly Ambrose had delivered them a crushing innings victory in the previous Test at Edgbaston, but in seven subsequent years, the team has failed to win a single match on their travels against any of the senior Test nations. They were

crushed in four Tests out of four on their last trip to England in 2004, and so regardless of Monday's gloomy denouement, this was undoubtedly a moral victory for Ramnaresh Sarwan and his unfancied side.

Such psychological horse-trading is all that this low-key contest is good for now. The second Test in Headingley is looming at the end of the week, and on Tuesday the international caravan ups sticks to Leeds, the scene of West Indies' infamous two-day defeat on that 2000 tour. Of the two squads, however, it'll be England who will carry the most baggage from this result, as they reflect on a fixture that passed so perfectly for six members of their team, but so pitifully for two rather crucial bowlers.

Matthew Hoggard made his debut in that 2000 Lord's Test -- his contribution was so unobtrusive that Nasser Hussain forgot he was even on the pitch during the second innings, as Andrew Caddick, Darren Gough and Dominic Cork ran amok. This time, however, the exact opposite was true. Hoggard featured for just 10.1 overs before an abductor strain forced him from the field, but his absence echoed through the corridors of an empty fast-bowling performance.

"It's challenging when you lose one of your frontline bowlers, but the positive is that the seamers got better as we went on," said Peter Moores, as he reflected on his first

Test as England's new coach. "It's nice we still bowled them out." That aspect of the performance, however, owed everything to the admirable Monty Panesar, a man who shares Hoggard's plegmatism and appetite for the hard yards. England would not have lost without him, but they would almost certainly have been embarrassed.

Hoggard will surely not feature at Headingley. According to Moores, his injury is pain-free, but the danger is of aggravating the damage and ruling him out in the long term. It means that, after a run of 40 consecutive matches, he will have effectively missed three Tests in a row, starting with the Sydney Test back in January. James Anderson is the man who should slot back into the eleven, although his most recent nine overs for Lancashire were slapped for 68 runs.

The back-up for the squad is less easy to anticipate. Jon Lewis is injured, as is Stuart Broad, while Sajid Mahmood is badly off the boil. Durham's Graham Onions, who toured Bangladesh with Moores' A team in the winter, could well expect an invitation to join the squad -- although in light of Monday's archive entertainment, England could worse than offer a last hurrah to Gough and Caddick, the old staggers who have started their county seasons with such a bang. At least they could be guaranteed to hit the cutstrip.

Classy Milan vs dogged L'pool

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been us who were the favourites but now AC Milan have beaten Manchester United and maybe people think they are favourites.

"We still approach the game in the same way. They have a good team, we have a good team -- but I still have my notes from Istanbul -- not as a souvenir but because I will use them again for sure."

Benitez added: "If they are harder to beat it will be because their players have more experience of winning European competitions and experience of winning the World Cup.

"They will use their experience in this game but it is also the same situation for us. We have more experience now than two years ago too. From my point of view, the two teams are in a similar situation."

If everyone is fit, Milan's first XI virtually picks itself with Ancelotti's only real selection issue being whether he opts for the finishing prowess of Filippo Inzaghi or the greater youthful vigour of Alberto Gilardino in a forward partnership with Kaka, the Brazilian who has been the tournament's outstanding performer this season with 10 goals.

Benitez's fondness for constantly adapting his formations to suit their opponents make Liverpool's starting line-up less easy to predict. But he seems certain to deploy two holding midfielders as insurance against Kaka's ability to wreak havoc in the spaces between the back four and midfield.

Javier Mascherano will take one of those with the second slot a straight choice between the drive of Momo Sissoko and the superior passing ability of Xabi Alonso.

Up front, Dirk Kuyt has established himself as an automatic choice but the Dutchman could be paired with either Peter Crouch or Craig Bellamy, or deployed as a lone striker with Steven Gerrard given license to roam in the spaces behind him.

But with an injury to Bolo Zenden meaning the injury-prone Harry Kewell -- who went off early in the match two years ago -- is likely to start on the left flank, it would seem likely that Gerrard will be restricted to a right-sided role while Bellamy is asked to use his pace to stretch the Milan back four.

MCC urges

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Cricket Committee, the framer and copyright holder of laws of the game, said the length of the prestigious tournament must be curtailed.

"The committee recommends that the Cricket World Cup should last no longer than one month. The format of the tournament, which finished in the Caribbean last month after almost seven weeks, should be urgently reviewed with the intention of reducing the length of the next tournament, due to take place in 2011," it said in a statement issued on Monday.

In order to limit the number of one-sided matches, the panel advocated participation of fewer teams in the event.

"The number of participating nations should be reduced and the competition restructured to ensure fewer one-sided matches," it said.

Taking note of the farcical final match of the tournament played in the Caribbean, the MCC body said: "Every effort should be made to ensure that the World Cup final be played over 50 overs, even if this means going into a second or third day."

Sri Lanka post 296-9

STAR SPORT MONITOR

Half-centuries from captain Mahela Jayawardene and Chamara Silva boosted Sri Lanka to reach 296 for 9 in 50 overs in the third and final one-day international against Pakistan at the Sheikh Zayed Stadium in Abu Dhabi yesterday.

Silva (64) and Jayawardene (83) shared a 124-run fourth wicket stand after Sri Lanka slipped from a good start to 101-3 in the 19th over.

Silva struck four boundaries in his 87-ball knock while the 29-year-old skipper struck seven fours and two sixes in his 81-ball 83. Earlier, Upul Tharanga forced his way to a rapid 40 off 37 balls.

For Pakistan, who have already won the series 2-0, Iftikhar Anjum took three wickets for 53 runs while off-spinner Mohammad Hafeez chipped in with two wickets. The series winners also gave debuts to young guns Fawad Alam and Najaf Shah, who bowled 10 fruitless overs giving away 59 runs.

Asif pulled up

CRICINFO, undated

Mohammad Asif has received an official reprimand from Javagal Srinath, the match referee, for violating the ICC Code of Conduct. The censure relates to Asif's reaction after dismissing Mahela Jayawardene, the Sri Lankan captain, in the second ODI of the three-match series in Abu Dhabi. Asif was found guilty of breaching Rule C1 of the ICC Code which states that all players and officials must conduct play within the spirit of the game.

"It sent out the wrong message to the many people watching the match either at the ground or on television and everyone has to be aware that such behaviour has no place on the cricket field where players must always seek to act as role models," Srinath said while talking about the incident.

"There is nothing wrong with being fired up as a bowler but Asif's aggressive reaction crossed the line of what is acceptable by showing disrespect to an opponent," Srinath said, while explaining his decision. He added that Asif's prior disciplinary record had saved him from a higher penalty. If Asif is found guilty of the same offence within the next 12 months, the penalty will become a Level 2 offence.

Srinath said that he reached his conclusion after a hearing on Monday morning. The meeting was attended by Asif, Pakistan coach Talat Ali and the match officials. The charge was laid by Russell Tiffin and Suresh Shastri, the on-field umpires. Asif, who was appointed vice-captain for the series, admitted to the charge after viewing footage of the incident.

Vieira joins

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Domenech, who is already without striker Thierry Henry and defender Willy Sagnol.

Vieira has only recently come back from a troublesome right hamstring injury for which he had surgery.

France play at home to Ukraine and Georgia on June 2 and June 6.

France are tied on 12 points with Ukraine and Scotland at the top of Group B, but have a game in hand on the Scots. Italy are fourth in the group on 10 points, and like France have played five matches.

KEY BATTLES

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Nesta v Kuyt

Once a popular choice for the title of 'world's best defender', Alessandro Nesta's prowess has appeared to be on the wane at times during what has been an injury-blighted season. But he remains well-equipped to cope with the threat of Liverpool's main centre-forward. The Dutchman combines considerable physical presence with a ferocious work ethic and has been a hit with both the fans and Benitez in his first season at Anfield. There is however a question mark over whether he has the technique or the creative flair to really unsettle defenders of the calibre of Nesta and Paolo Maldini. Both Kuyt, whose cancer-stricken father will be unable to attend the final, and Nesta, who was forced to sit out most of Italy's successful World Cup campaign, have their own individual incentives to finish the season with a winner's medal.

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Chelsea ready

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However, the Via Turati outfit may consider offering 12 million pounds and including Georgian defender Kakha Kaladze in the operation.

Chelsea chief executive Peter Kenyon had stated on Sunday that Shevchenko and Michael Ballack would not be sold.

"It's not going to happen. We brought both these players in for three, four years," he said. "We didn't bring them in for a season and we knew fully well what their capabilities are."

"I'm confident they are going to be here as big players with Chelsea next season. They feel they have a lot more to give as it takes time to settle in."

Injuries keep Eng waiting



AFP, London

England will have to wait on the fitness of several key players before they name their squad for the second Test against the West Indies.

The hosts are set to be without swing specialist Matthew Hoggard at Headingley, where the second match of a four-Test series starts on Friday, after the Yorkshire pace bowler sustained a groin injury during the drawn first Test here at Lord's.

They are also waiting on all-rounder Andrew Flintoff, who didn't make the team at Lord's after suffering a recurrence of his longstanding left ankle injury.

But first-choice captain Michael Vaughan is set to return at his Yorkshire home ground after being ruled out with a broken finger.

"Matthew is quite doubtful for Headingley but that's why we don't want to announce the squad yet," England coach Peter Moores told reporters after rain had the final say in what was his first Test in charge.

"We want to see how he is tomorrow (Tuesday), check our injuries and then announce the squad."

Both Flintoff and Hoggard are set to have fitness tests on Tuesday and so too is Vaughan.

"Michael looks like he'll play," said former Sussex coach and wicketkeeper Moores. "He will

have a severe fitness test tomorrow (Tuesday). Every time he's had a bat there's been a little bit of pain, but nothing that should stop him playing."

"Before this Test Michael had played well in county cricket and I think his record as captain goes without saying so we want to get him back in there at the start of something new and get him playing again for England."

England batsmen gorged themselves against a modest West Indies attack, with four batsmen -- debutant wicketkeeper Matt Prior (126 not out), all-rounder Paul Collingwood (111), Ian Bell (109 not out) and Alastair Cook (105) all scoring centuries in a first innings total of 553 for five declared.

Kevin Pietersen then set up England's victory charge with a dashing 109 in the second innings.

But West Indies comfortably survived the follow-on, a testament to the lack of support left-arm spinner Monty Panesar (six for 129) received from the England seamers.

Spearhead fast bowler Stephen Harmison was frequently off-target as he recorded mediocre match figures of one for 138 from 36 overs in his first England appearance after a disappointing Ashes tour was followed by the 28-year-old Durham quick's retirement from one-day internationals.

"He's been bowling really well in county cricket and come to this game and put himself under pressure, but has got better as the

game has gone on," said Moores of Harmison.

"I think he'll be so much better for having played a Test match and getting through that so I expect him to have a chance to really enjoy himself and go out and bowl at Headingley."

Moores added: "We've had players in this Test who have had fantastic games like Matthew Prior and Steve would have liked to have had a better game but in sport you have good days and bad days."

West Indies' lone injury concern is opening batsman Daren Ganga, who has a forearm problem but Ramnaresh Sarwan, the tourists' captain, said he did not expect there to be any changes to his side for the second Test.

Ancelotti

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fitness, Maldini, who has appeared in seven European Cup finals, will partner Alessandro Nesta at the heart of Milan's defence, flanked by Marek Jankulovski -- rated by former Czech Republic teammate Pavel Nedved as the best Czech player playing at the moment -- on the left and Massimo Oddo on the right.

The midfield quartet will comprise Gennaro Gattuso, Andrea Pirlo, Clarence Seedorf and Massimo Ambrosini.

Seedorf will be given licence to get forward as often as he can, while Ambrosini may be asked to mark Liverpool's inspirational captain, Steven Gerrard.

Ancelotti admitted there were nerves in the Milan camp.

"There is some tension, but that's not a bad thing," he said.

"There are two days before the big match and the tension is slowly rising."

"But that's perfectly normal and we have prepared well. We will give it our best."

AC Milan are desperate to atone for their nightmare in Istanbul two years ago.

Having looked certain to beat Liverpool after taking a 3-0 lead at half time, Milan inexplicably imploded in a bizarre six-minute spell in the second half in which they allowed Liverpool to score three times and level the tie.

Extra-time failed to separate the two sides, but Liverpool held their nerve in the penalty shoot-out to lift the trophy.

Robson takes

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1995 and after, a relegation, 1998.

He successfully kept West Brom in the Premiership in 2005 but they were relegated last year and Robson left the club after a disappointing start to the next campaign.

Robson said he was delighted to be taking over a side that was already packed with talent and well-placed to jump back into the Premiership next season.

"I'm delighted to come back with such an ambitious squad," he told Sky Sports News.

"It's a great challenge, we have some good players and with just a bit of fine-tuning they have a great chance of getting back up, but it will take a lot of hard work."

"I would like to keep all the best players and give them the challenge of getting back up, but also build the club so if we go up we have a better chance of surviving."

Blades chairman Kevin McCabe said Robson was the man to lead Sheffield back into the top flight.

"Bryan is an experienced manager but also as we all know was a fantastic player, and we believe he is the manager who will blend the squad and improve Sheffield United and lead us back to where we rightfully belong, in the Premiership, in a short space of time," he said.

BANGLADESH-INDIA FIRST TEST SCOREBOARD

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Did not bat: Anil Kumble, VRV Singh, Rudra Pratap Singh

Fall of wickets: 1-0, 2-6, 3-60, 4-64, 5-78, 6-93.

Bowler	O	M	R	W	NB/W
Shahadat Hossain	7	3	30	2	w-1
Mashrafe Bin Mortaza	8	1	36	1	nb-3, w-1
Mohammad Rafique	8	0	27	3	-
Enamul Haque	1	0	6	0	nb-1
BANGLADESH: Second innings					
	R	B	4s	6s	
Javed Omar not out	52	80	8	1	
Shahnar Nafees c Mahendra Dhone b Rudra Pratap Singh	1	9	0	0	
Habibul Bashhar c Rudra Pratap Singh b Ramesh Powar	37	49	6	0	
Rajin Saleh not out	7	31	0	0	
Extras: (lb-6, nb-1)	7				
Total: (For 2 wickets in 28 overs)	104				
Fall of wickets: 1-12, 2-82.					

Bowler	O	M	R	W	NB/W
Zaheer Khan	7	0	24	0	-
Rudra Pratap Singh	6	0	29	1	-
VRV Singh	5	1	22	0	nb-1
Ramesh Powar	7	2	16	1	-
Sachin Tendulkar	3	0	7	0	-
Result: Match drawn.					
Man-of-the-match: Mashrafe Bin Mortaza.					
Toss: India					
Umpires: Daryl Harper (AUS) and Billy Doctrove (WIS)					
TV umpire: Enamul Haque Moni (BAN)					
Match referee: Roshan Mahanama (SRI)					

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS	38	Complain loudly	4	Emily Dickinson's output	22	Source of wealth
1 "Li Abner"	41	Crib	5	Culture of waste-land	23	PC operator
5 Circle portion	42	Eject	6	Crimson target	24	Tract of waste-land
8 Liniment	43	Medusa's hair	7	With cunning	25	Remains loyal to
12 Bread spread	44	Teaspoonful	8	P.M. before and after	26	Gripes
13 Tooth-paste	45	"See ya"	9	Churchill variety	27	Pavarotti solo
14 Spring phenomenon	46	"Holy cow!"	10	Locomotive noise	28	Gripes repeatedly
15 Sing to	47	Ostentation	11	Entertainment	29	
17 Melody	53	Get a glimpse of	10	Marshall's	30	Wormholes
18 Paving gunk						
19 Coarse						
21 Book-jacket	DOWN	1 Lettuce variety	16	Apprentice		
24 Present	2 Pub order			hence		
25 Optimistic	3 Part of RPM			20 Incited	21 Fan biz	
26 York or Snorkel						
30 Praise in verse						
31 New-keyed						
32 "Norma —"						
33 Peace						
35 Predetermines the outcome						
36 Sog, e.g.						
37 Dog walker's need						

Solution time: 21 min									
E	W	E	S	T	I	F	F		
C	A	S	H	A	B	A			
M	O	O	N	E	R	A	K	E	R
		E	E	C	S	C	O	I	
C	A	S	H	A	B	A			
T	O	A	D	E	R				
S	P	R	I	G	B	I	T		
C	A	S	H	A	B	A			
P	A	R	T	S					
I	C	K	E	R					
L	O	K	E	R					
P	E	R	E	R	A	S	E		