Beijing on Sunday.

FROM PAGE 17

Olympics a year earlier.

Chinese organisers meanwhile

said a woman who burst into the

opening ceremony and tried to

remove her clothes was mentally ill

mounting a political protest.

and dismissed suggestions she was

Press photos and TV pictures

showed staff grappling with the

woman, clad only in blue jeans and

a bra, as she lay on the floor of the

"Bird's Nest" National Stadium

The intrusion, as 4,000 athletes

were entering the stadium, was one

of the worst security breaches seen

during the Olympics or Paralympics.

remove her shirt. She was stopped

by our staff," said Zhu Jing, a press

officer with the Beijing organising

authorities that she was mentally

Michael Hussey has not given up

hope of Andrew Symonds joining

Australia's tour of India, although he

concedes the team is still "up in the

air" just two weeks before the squad

departs. Australia consider a Test

trip to India the toughest challenge

in world cricket and several senior

players have had less-than-ideal

half-centuries against Bangladesh

in Darwin, where he was the Player

of the Series, Symonds was ponder-

ing his future and Brett Lee was in

Sydney dealing with the break-up

of his marriage. Ricky Ponting was

also absent as he continued his

recovery from wrist surgery and

Matthew Hayden was nursing an

at the moment," Hussey said.

anything. Luckily for us, the experi-

enced players that can come back

in to the team, such as Ponting,

Hayden, Symonds, Lee, they know

they've played well in India before,

whether it be one-day cricket or

Test cricket and so I don't think it'll

take them too long. We're going to

have two practice games plus I'm

"They've got a lot of experience,

their games very well.

"We're certainly not settled on

"We're pretty much up in the air

ongoing Achilles tendon problem.

While Hussey was grinding out

preparation for the four-Test tour.

ill," Zhu added.

Cricket

CRICINFO, Darwin

"It was confirmed later by

"She tried to enter the field and

during Saturday's extravaganza.

Du Toit wins gold

four golds.

records apiece.

The United States and Britain catching venues used for last

going on to take gold.

both finished the opening day with

off in the Olympic cycling, grab-

bing three track golds. Britain and

Australia notched up three world

almost six seconds off his own world

record in the qualifying round of the

men's individual pursuit before

Monday, with much attention

focused on South Africa's double

amputee track sensation Oscar

Pistorius -- dubbed "Blade Runner"

due to the carbon fibre blades with

clean sweep in the sprints and is

also eyeing the 400m world record.

from nearly 150 countries and

regions are battling for 472 gold

medals in 20 sports at the eye-

Hussey wants Roy aboard

amounts of nets and I'm sure

that triumphed in India in 2004-05

and he is looking forward to his

first experience of what the

Australians describe as their "Ever-

est". The core group has changed

significantly since then and while

Hussey believes Australia are still

favourites to retain the Border-

Gavaskar Trophy, it will be a gruel-

challenge," Hussey said. "I've

never played a Test in India but I

think the Australian team that won

in '04, they said that was probably

the Everest and I don't think that's

changing. India are arguably up

there with the top two or three

teams in the world and I think it's

going to be a wonderful series.

Probably the hardest place to win

means the players must remain

focused at all times. Hussey said

that meant it was particularly

important that Symonds be prop-

put his hand up for selection.

cricket and also the team.

erly mentally prepared if he was to

point of view he can get his head

right," Hussey said. "India is a

place that you do have to be 100 per

cent committed to the game of

"He's a very important member

"I just hope from Andrew's

The difficult nature of the trip

in international cricket."

"It's probably the toughest

ling contest.

Hussey was not part of the team

they'll be fine and ready to go.'

Pistorius has set his sights on a

More than 4,000 competitors

which he has won a host of titles.

The athletics programme starts

Britain's Darren Kenny knocked

Britain picked up where they left

# SPORT

### SA rejects tri-series

CRICINFO, undated

The proposal for a tri-series in South Africa, also involving Pakistan and probably Sri Lanka has been rejected by Cricket South Africa, who said their top players need to rest after the recent tour of England.

"Cricket South Africa [CSA] have today informed us they can't arrange the series as their players have had a long and hectic tour of England which ended on a disappointing note for them," Shafqat Naghmi, the Pakistan board's chief operating officer, told Reuters. Naghmi was also told by a CSA official that "South Africa's leading players were not interested in playing in a series immediately after their tour of England".

South Africa's coach Mickey Arthur had expressed concerns that fatigue was hampering his team's progress after their 4-0 loss to England in the recent one-day series and warned the administrators against "flogging a dead horse"

The PCB was trying to arrange the tournament to fill the gap created by the postponement of the Champions Trophy which was scheduled to be held in Pakistan in September. However, five of the participating nations said they would not travel to Pakistan because of security concerns, forcing the tournament to be put

"We have the option of inviting one or two teams for one-day matches but will only go ahead with them after getting a clearance from the Interior Ministry, Naghmi told the News.

Pakistan are now trying to set up a one-day series against Sri Lanka.

# MS stays put

PTI, Dubai

Mahendra Singh Dhoni hung on to his place atop the ODI batting chart but Australian Nathan Bracken surrendered top slot in bowlers' rankings to Daniel Vettori after his relatively disappointing series against Bangladesh.

In three ODIs, 30-year-old Bracken took just two wickets at an average of 29 which allowed New Zealand captain Vettori topple the Australian.

Vettori had surged to the top of bowling chart back in February before Bracken swapped places with the left-arm spinner following the second ODI between England and New Zealand in June.

Bracken's teammate Mitchell Johnson has also slipped one place to fourth but fellow pacer Stuart Clark has jumped four rungs after picking up five wickets at an average of 9.20. He shares 15th spot with the West Indies' Daren Powell and Pakistan's Iftikhar Anjum, according to an ICC release yesterday.

Shane Watson has returned to the top-50 after rocketing 14 places to share 40th place with India's Praveen Kumar.

Left-arm spinner Abdur Razzak has strengthened his status as Bangladesh's premier bowler by climbing seven places to 27th position while Shakib Al Hasan has also jumped seven places to 39th spot.

#### Federer outguns

FROM PAGE 17

give me a chance because he served well," Djokovic said. "I knew the third set was crucial. If it went my way I had a bigger chance to get the victory."

Djokovic surrendered a break in the fifth game of the fourth set, sent a backhand volley wide to give away another in the seventh, and saw Federer hit a winner to hold and end matters after two hours and 45 minutes.

Federer improved to 7-2 alltime against Djokovic, who ended the Swiss' run of 10 consecutive Slam finals by beating him in an Australian Open semifinal.

Federer has never lost a US open semifinal or final and was last beaten here by David Nalbandian in the 2003 fourth round.

Djokovic was unhappy at playing his semifinal just 31 hours after he went to bed from a night quarterfinal, saying, "It's not really the best thing you want to have for yourself. But what are you going to do? I had bad luck."

### Extra night

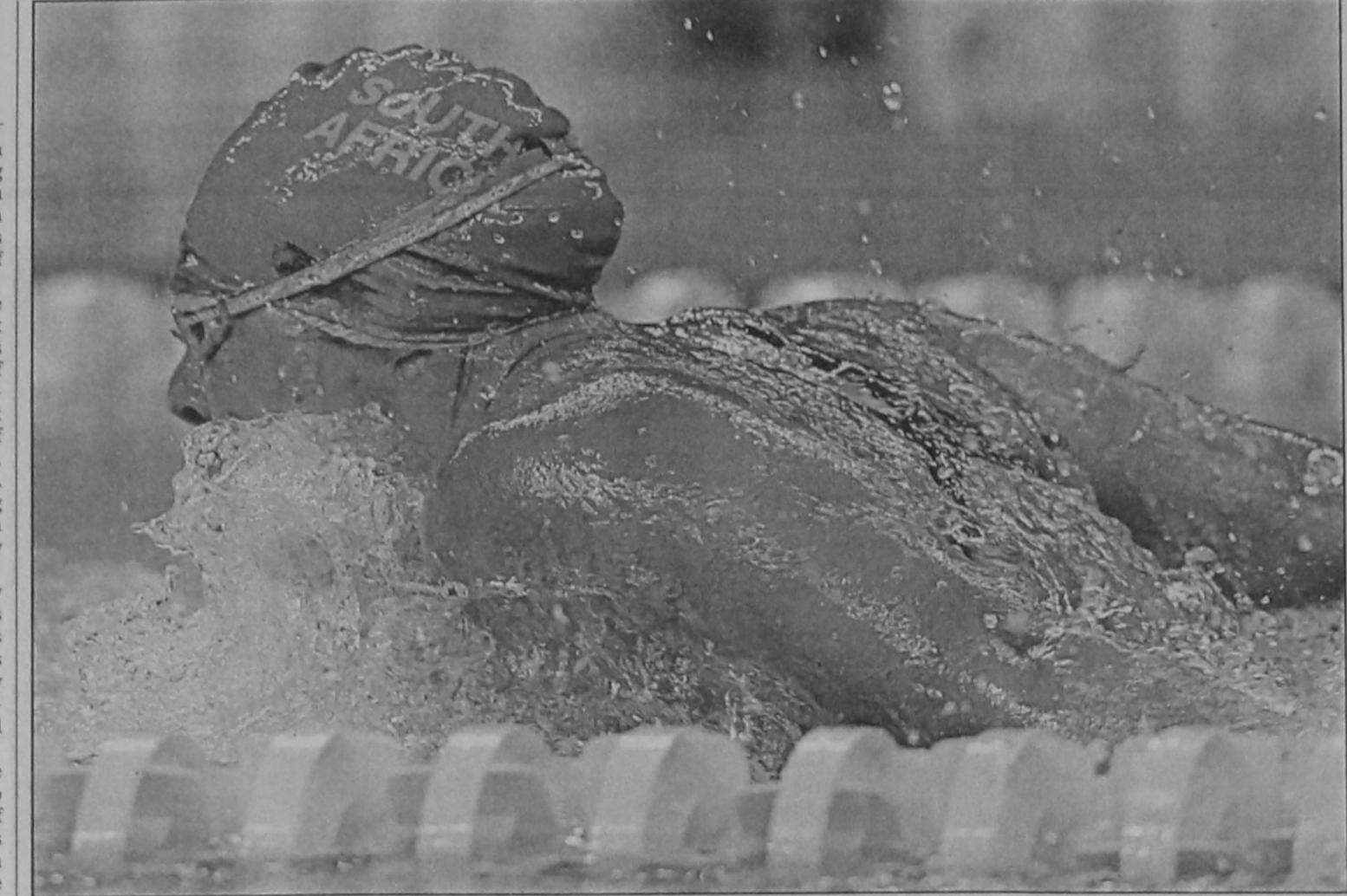
FROM PAGE 17 four by Nadal, and forced Nadal to save three break points in the third game of the second set and two more in the fifth game before fight-

ing to the tie-breaker. A service winner gave Murray a 6-5 edge in the tie-break and the 21-year-old Scotsman claimed the set when Nadal sent a cross-court backhand wide, pumping his fists and yelling, "Come on," as he seized command of the match.

The joy was short lived. Nadal, in his first US Open semifinal, broke Murray to open the third set and was about to serve when the rains came.

Nadal is trying to become only the second Spaniard in the 40-year Open era to win the US title, the first being Manuel Orantes in 1975

when the event was played on clay. Tournament officials moved the match to Louis Armstrong Stadium from Arthur Ashe Stadium in hopes of outracing the raindrops, but did not start it until 40 minutes after noon.



Natalie du Toit of South Africa swims in the women's 100m butterfly S9 final during the 2008 Beijing Paralympic Games at the National Aquatics Center in

today

month's Olympics such as the

Host China, which topped the

medals table at the 2004 Athens

Paralympics with 63 golds ahead of

Britain and Canada, is widely

expected to dominate again -- and

even more comprehensively than

Paralympics, which ends on

September 17, include athletics,

swimming, powerlifting, wheel-

chair fencing and five-a-side and

seven-a-side football, as well as the

China, eager to showcase the

lesser-known goalball and boccia.

progress it has made in catering for

the disabled, has adopted the

motto "Two Games with Equal

Splendour," for the Games, com-

Like the Olympics, the Paralympics

have not been free of scandal and

there will again be a focus in Beijing

effective in a place like India.

haven't spoken to him, I haven't

heard anything, but I'm hoping

the cut it will leave Australia with an

extra batting position available in

the squad, with Simon Katich

almost certain to move into the

starting top six. Hussey's brother

David could well be in line for that

back-up position after earning a

Cricket Australia contract this year

and playing all three ODIs against

sure," Hussey said. "He's playing

well for Victoria for the last few

years. He's a very good player of

spin. But I don't know, there's some

on September 21 and until then the

players will be at home, each indi-

vidual working on their own game

ahead of the trip. Despite picking

up two half-centuries against

Bangladesh, Hussey believes his

own form is still scratchy and he

will be spending time in the nets

little things which I still don't think

are perfect by any stretch of the

imagination," he said. "I've still got a

fair bit of work to do to get that right

before I get to India and it's probably

going to be an ongoing process."

"I'm tinkering with a couple of

over the next fortnight.

The Australians depart for India

other quality players as well."

"He's got to come into it for

Bangladesh.

Should Symonds fail to make

he's going to be part of that trip.'

paring them to the Olympics.

to stamp out any cheating.

sure they'll be able to get copious of our side and I think he'd be very

The 20 sports at the

at last month's Olympics.

"Bird's Nest" and the Water Cube.

PTI, New Delhi

awardees

International Cricket Council chief executive Haroon Lorgat will announce the short-lists for this year's LGICC Awards here today.

ICC shortlists

The short-lists for eight individual prizes will include a new Twenty20 International Performance of the Year category and the award ceremony will take place in Dubai on September 10, according to an ICC statement.

The short-lists for the men's awards have been compiled after votes were submitted by a 25person panel from around the world, made up of renowned former players, respected members of the media, and an elite umpire and elite match referee.

The panel members were asked to vote for players nominated by a Selection Panel chaired by former West Indies captain Clive Lloyd.

The short-lists for the Women's Cricketer of the Year Award were decided after each of the world's top 10 teams was given the opportunity to nominate two players.

This award was then voted on by a separate 16-person voting academy featuring former players and other experts on the women's

The LGICC Awards ceremony is now in its fifth year and this will be the first time it will be staged in Dubai. Previous ceremonies were held in London (2004), Sydney (2005), Mumbai (2006) and Johannesburg (2007).

In addition to the individual awards and the Spirit of Cricket Award, this year's awards will also feature the selection of the Test and ODI Teams of the Year.

### Abahani meet

FROM PAGE 17 opted to play a warm-up match

after Mohammedan did not turn up. The second semifinal, however, was as exciting as it could get and Brothers had to come from behind twice to edge Rahmatganj 3-2 with a brace from Abdullah Parvez.

Rahmatganj, despite conceding a number of goals in the group matches, seemed to get along with the new format of the game and gave their mighty opponents a run for their money.

Zakir and Jahangir scored for the old-Dhaka outfit in the 16 and 22 minutes but Parvez equalised on both occasions with strikes in 20 and 24 minutes before Tapu slotted a 33rd minute winner.

BFF president Kazi Salahuddin will distribute trophies after the final as chief guest.

## No. 1 ranking

FROM PAGE 17

this is why I came here." Williams, who is in her first US Open final in six years, said all the

pressure is on Jankovic. "I have nothing to lose," Williams said. "I am going against someone that is ranked higher than

"She has a lot of pressure to win her first Grand Slam and I am just enjoying every moment."

This will be the seventh career meeting between Jankovic and Williams with each winning three times. Williams won their last meeting earlier this year in Miami

6-1, 5-7, 6-3. They have never met in a final before but Jankovic has won both times they squared off in a semifinal in Los Angeles (2006) and Dubai

"I don't know too many people on the tour that can hang in there as much as she can," Williams said. "She's playing well and she's just

# Much to consider

Cricket

PETER ROEBUCK

India and Australia are supposed to be formidable forces preparing to renew a fierce struggle for supremacy. Instead both sides have much on their minds.

More than usual the outcome of the coming series will depend on decisions taken beforehand. It's not going to be easy for either side to determine its course. Part of sport's challenge is that the path forward is always unmarked.

As far as the Australians are concerned, the results remain imposing. The West Indies and Bangladesh did not trouble them. Australia remains unyielding and professional. Yet the Sydney Test took a toll. Even now it is hard to understand how an experidarken so suddenly.

Perhaps it was the scream of a side desperate to prove itself. It was, and remains, madness.

And the consequences were far reaching. Not long afterwards Brad Hogg had retired from Test cricket. Everyone assumed that he had been offered a deal but it was not so. He'd had enough. It's been a long time since an accredited Australian cricketer walked so blithely away.

Shaun Tait also stepped aside, temporarily in his case. Wounded by exposure and expectation, he

lost confidence and yearned for the or scoring runs. All of them, the four shadows.

Cricket can be a humiliating game. His withdrawal reinforced the impression of unease in antipodean ranks. Evidently the Australians had shed an old skin

and had not yet grown another one. Now Andrew Symonds has been dispatched. Symonds is a funny, private, insecure, stubborn and sensitive man with powerful emotions and growing influence.

When he is angry he expresses himself in furious actions, blasting hundreds or protesting pointedly.

He hated all the palaver around the SCG Test and does not think Bangladesh belong in top class that frustration makes him selfdestructive. He is a senior player and ought to act accordingly.

enced team allowed its mood to and Ricky Ponting's injury add to the impression that the Australians are vulnerable. Certainly it seems that the coach and captain have contemplate. It's tempting to lost their grip.

ground. Already the limited-over side has shrugged off the past and sought vigour and vitality

Meanwhile the Test team remains unchanged. Everyone recognises that the great men are growing old together.

Opinions vary about the required response. It's not that any of them are suddenly incapable of taking wicket Hindu website)

middle order batsmen and their combative captain, have the glint of battle in their eyes. Meanwhile younger contenders promise more then they deliver. But youth is never any

use till given its head. Yet the slow slide is underway. Eventually the mind loses its edge and the ball loses its sting. Fielding and running between wickets become a chore, and concentration lapses more often than previously. As a rule batsmen are at their peak between 28 and 34. Bowlers lose their zip in their early thirties. Ageing cricketers are forced to live on their considerable wits.

Dare India send all five of its elders cricket. Its not that he's wrong, just into battle against the Australians? At present the Test team offers a thousand memories and a limited outlook. But the Australians are coming Brett Lee's personal problems nextmonthnotnextyear. And, despite everything, the

Indians only lost narrowly last time around. Both camps have much to attach labels, Australia the ruthless, But India is also on shaky India the sentimental. But these are The important thing is to be

right. Victory will go to the side that starts the series with a spring in its

Perish the thought, but England seems to be the most settled team right now.

(Peter Roebuck wrote this on the

# Freddie pretty pleased

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

Andrew Flintoff says he's enjoying playing in a new, winning England set-up under a confident Kevin Pietersen. Flintoff was the leading run-getter and wicket-taker in England's 4-0 triumph ODI over South Africa, and feels the present ODI team is a well-balanced outfit that could turn into a champion side given a decent run.

"I've played in three World Cups and in each one of them, a week before the tournament began England didn't know its best side and there was loads of chopping and changing," Flintoff was quoted as saying on the ECB website. "I'm sure if these lads are allowed to play with each other over a length of time, I think that's the way they'll develop into a really good team."

England are yet to win a World Cup - they reached the final in 1979, 1987 and 1992 -- or the Champions Trophy, where they reached the final when hosting the tournament in 2004 and lost to West Indies. But Flintoff was bullish on the future. "We've got all bases covered and when you've got Luke Wright coming in to bat at No. 8 that's a strong line-up," he said. "Everything is there but it's been there in the past so it's more about a mindset or a confidence thing, which I'm sure this side will get from Kevin.

"One of the big things he has

passed on to the side so far is confidence. He's a confident lad and I think that's started to rub off on to quite a few of the players. When you see the way he goes about his business, especially towards his own game, no matter how good a player you are you can still watch and earn from that."

What's needed now, Flintoff said, is for this team to be given time. "If we're allowed to play together over a long period of time and allowed to grow together then this side has great potential."

With the postponement of the Champions Trophy, England's next scheduled ODI will only be in December, when they take on India for a seven-match series. "We're on a roll against South Africa and it would have been great to take that form into a tournament," Flintoff said. "The Champions Trophy is not the biggest tournament we could win but I remember when we got to the final in England a few years ago [2004] and everyone was gutted we didn't win it, so we'll have to take

that form to India now instead." Flintoff, who has led England in the past, said he was content with his role in this squad. "I think I've found my perfect role within the side," Flintoff said. "I've had a go at captaincy and I think now in my own way I can lead. Kevin is obviously the captain and he's in charge, but I can help by passing on some of the things I've learnt to the younger lads, especially the bowlers, and I can be there for Kevin to

give advice if he needs it.

"It also allows me to get on with my game as well. Kev has spoken to me and a few of the senior players about getting involved and helping and I'm keen to do that, and this role I've been given now is one I feel very comfortable with."

Flintoff, who hadn't played a Test for nearly 18 months and an ODI for almost a year, said he learnt a lot during his time away from international cricket. "I think I'm a better cricketer for those dark times and a better person," Flintoff said. "When you experience tough times, the better times are that much sweeter.

"I was sitting on the balcony at Lord's the other day after we'd won and one of the lads asked if I'd enjoyed it," he said. "I'd been through a whole host of things just to be sitting there with a Man-of-the-Match award and playing for a side that's 4-0 up in a series against South

Africa, so ljust couldn't stop smiling. Ankle injuries had threatened to curtail Flintoff's career: he's needed four operations to fix the problem. "It's a complete reversal from six months ago and I suppose that all goes back to enjoyment and I'm

absolutely loving it at the moment. "One of the things I was determined to do when I came back into international cricket was that I wanted to enjoy it," he said. "I knew there was going to be pressure on me but cricket's not life or death, it's a game and it's to be enjoyed. Possibly for a period I lost that enjoyment."

# Austria scalp France

FROM PAGE 17

Croatia who opened their campaign on Saturday with a 3-0 win over Kazakhstan. Portugal, World Cup semifinal-

ists in 2006, saw off little Malta 4-0 to top Group One but it was only late in the game that they really dominated. A Brian Said own-goal gave the

Portuguese, with Carlos Queiros having succeeded Luiz Felipe Scolari at the helm, a 25th-minute lead before Hugo Almeida, Simao and Nani added to the total in the last 30 minutes. Spain, with Vicente del Bosque

having taken over from Luis Aragones, opened their Group Five campaign with a 1-0 win over Bosnia-Herzegovina in Murcia. Missing the injured Fernando

Torres and David Silva, they needed a 58th-minute goal from David Villa, who had missed a first-half penalty to secure the three points. In the same group, Turkey beat

Armenia 2-0 in a highly-charged encounter in Yerevan. In Group Four, striker Lukas Podolski gave the perfect answer to

last week's accusation of "whining"

with two goals as Germany beat Liechtenstein 6-0. The 23-year-old Bayern Munich forward struck either side of halftime to lead Germany's charge and he has now scored 30 goals for his

country in 56 matches. Scotland wilted in 35-degree heat in Skopje and fell to a 1-0 defeat in Group Nine to Macedonia.

Ilco Naumoski gave Macedonia a fifth-minute lead which they clung onto to leave Scotland boss George Burley still looking for his first win.

"We were disappointed to lose but for the whole of the second-half

I thought we dominated the game," Burley said. Scotland now travel to Iceland

on Wednesday where a win will be crucial from a group where the Netherlands are expected to clinch top spot. In Group Three, where the Czech

Republic and Poland are tipped to

dominate, Northern Ireland lost 2-1 against Slovakia in Bratislava. Poland could only draw 1-1 at home to Slovenia. A Michal

Zewlakow penalty put Poland in front in Worclaw, but Zlatko Dedic levelled for Slovenia. In Cardiff, teenage striker Samuel Vokes came off the bench

to score a late winner as Wales beat Azerbaijan 1-0 in Group Four. Only the nine group winners are

assured of places in the finals with the eight best runners-up playing off for the remaining four spots.

# Clark doesn't agree with Kirsten

Cricket

PTI, Melbourne

Australia pacer Stuart Clark has dismissed India coach Gary Kirsten's recent comment that allrounder Andrew Symonds's likely absence from next month's four-Test series would ease tension between the two sides.

In all probability, Symonds will miss Australia's tour to India after he was punished by Cricket Australia (CA) on charges of indiscipline. He is currently undergoing professional counselling.

"People still love to see him thing. playing cricket and people love playing against him and competing against him, because he is that type of person," Clark was quoted as saying by 'The Australian'.

Kirsten yesterday insisted that tries. I wouldn't have thought absence of the volatile all-rounder might help in reducing the tension

in the upcoming series Off late, Symonds has had a stormy relation with both Indian players and crowds. Booed and barracked in India, he along with India spinner Harbhajan Singh was the main architects of racism row during India's Australia tour last summer. "It's tough one because

Symonds is such a larger than life character. I wouldn't have thought so," Clark said. Clarke also held the media responsible for hyping the situation and insisted off the field there

is very little tension between the

"I've said all along it's media

Indian and Australian cricketers.

"The sides get on well -- off the field especially. There will be a little bit of competitiveness, which I hope is any game of cricket or any sporting match between two coun there'd be too much niggle as far as the nasty stuff," he said.

#### Bouncer awaits FROM PAGE 17 "We have appointed Ashraful as

captain till December this year with an idea that it would be helpful for him to keep the confidence but the time has come to review his position. He is even struggling with his own position in the

team," said Ashraf. "But we hardly have any choice to replace him ahead of the next home series against New Zealand but still we have to think about the issue seriously.

former national captain. Return of some senior players like Habibul Bashar has been talked about but Ashraf said that they have to think twice before taking any decision about the

"You must think why someone

seniors.

"We do have a lack of matured

players in the team," said the

was dropped from the squad before taking any decision. His fitness level and absence of international cricket must also be taken into count," explained going for glory. Ashraf.

#### By Eugene Sheffer DOWN 36 Borscht ACROSS 1 Places needs 1 Meadow 2 Piccadilly 4 Penicillin 37 Sell in statue small provider quantities 3 Curved lines

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13 Duel

tool

14 Grooving 45 Missing 48 Drive too on 15 Mixed close 50 Grand drink 17 Start a story 51 Curved garden molding 18 Source 52 Rocky 19 Prior

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FVQKL PVQ TCP AJ NJCKKP

NJKHTAJT AHT BVVL? Yesterday's Cryptoquip: SINCE SOMEONE

RUDELY SLASHED MY PATIO RECLINER, I SUPPOSE THAT'S A CUT TO THE CHAISE. Today's Cryptoquip Clue: P equals Y