

Van Jaarsveld to join Proteas

CRICINFO, undated

Vaughn van Jaarsveld will join South Africa's Test squad on Sunday to cover for ongoing injuries to Ashwell Prince and Graeme Smith. Prince suffered a cracked thumb prior to the Perth Test and Jean-Paul Duminy was promoted to the starting line-up, leaving no backup batsman in the touring party.

Smith has been battling an elbow problem that needed a painkilling injection before the Melbourne Test. He was intending to play through the Test series before assessing whether surgery was required.

Van Jaarsveld, 23, was already part of the squad for the limited-overs series that follows the Tests and his early arrival gives him a chance to acclimatise to the Australian conditions. A Lions left-hand batsman, van Jaarsveld is yet to make his international debut.

Keane fires

FROM PAGE 17
scored a 65th minute penalty after Gabriel Agbonlahor was brought down by William Gallas.

Arsenal, not for the first time this season, couldn't see out the game with Villa's Zlatko Keane scoring in stoppage time.

Two-goals apiece from Felipe Caicedo and Robinho at Eastlands helped Manchester City end a run of six games without a win in all competitions.

Caicedo put City ahead in the 15th minute when he turned in Stephen Ireland's cross. The Ecuadorian had his and City's second 12 minutes later, with Ireland again the provider.

Ireland also laid on City's third, releasing Robinho.

The Brazil forward made it 4-0 in the 36th minute with a picture-book goal after a superb cross from Shaun Wright-Phillips.

Craig Fagan pulled one back for Hull before Ireland got the goal his play deserved eight minutes from time.

Portsmouth took the lead through Nadir Belhadj before Jack Collison equalised for the Hammers.

Before half-time Pompey missed a penalty when former West Ham forward Jermain Defoe shot wide and, after the break, the visitors pulled away thanks to a goal from Carlton Cole and two from Craig Bellamy.

Everton's Australia international Tim Cahill again scored from a corner, following-up after his header was saved.

Ryan Taylor put Wigan in front with a 25-yard free-kick just before the half-hour mark.

Amir Zaki added a second from the penalty spot 17 minutes from time after Newcastle's Sebastien Bassong was sent-off for bringing down Emile Heskey.

Danny Guthrie's penalty two minutes from time came too late for Newcastle.

Aus tail wags

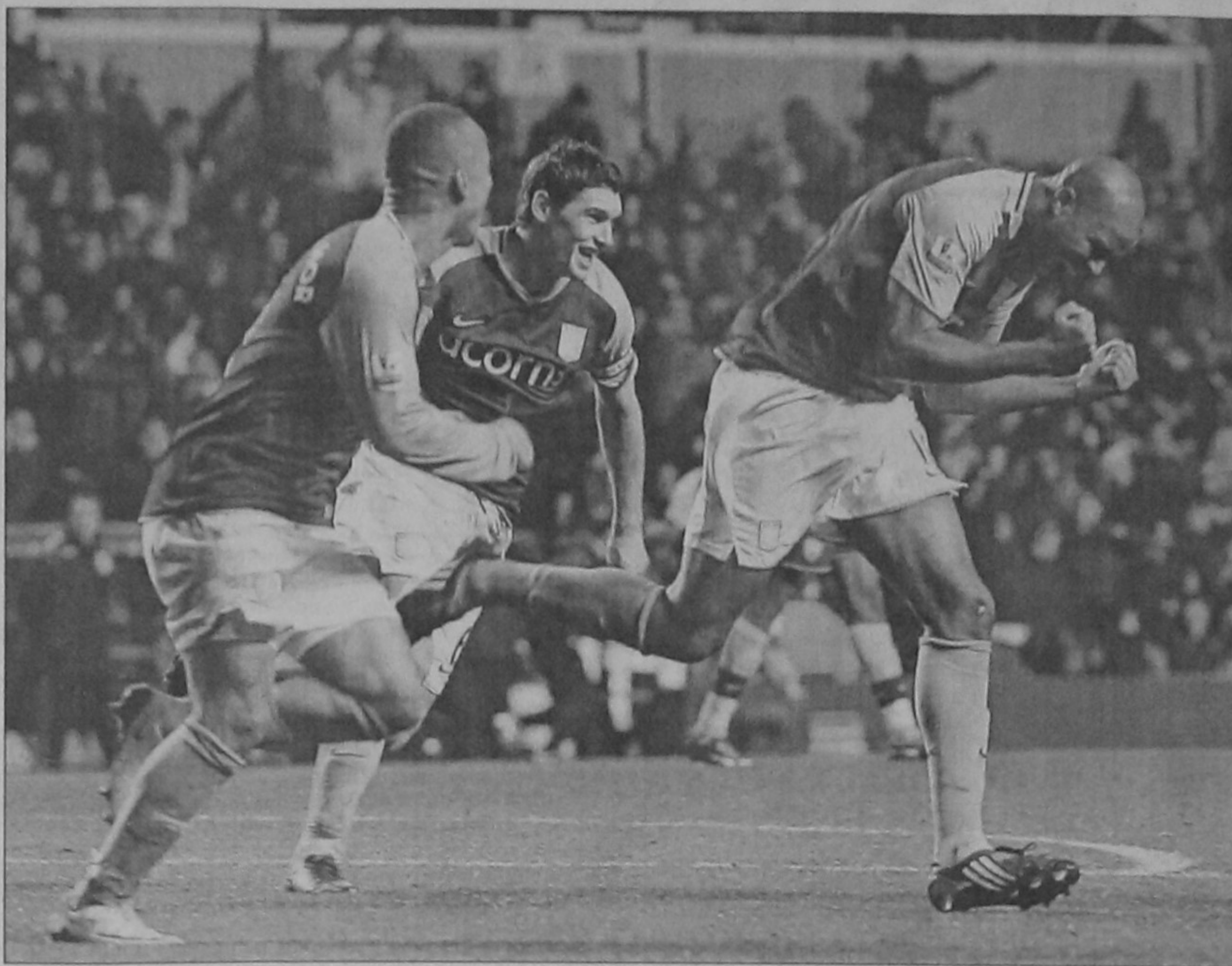
FROM PAGE 17
could ill afford to give up. They let Australia reach 394, well past the 350 Arthur wanted as an upper limit. Having struggled at the WACA, Dale Steyn was the one shining light with 5 for 87, which was a rare positive Arthur could take out of the day.

"I thought he was very good, I thought he was back to where he needed to be," Arthur said. "There was a hint of swing. He had some movement, he was getting back to the Dale Steyn that we knew. I was pretty happy and if he keeps improving it will be pretty exciting for us."

But Steyn will need to emulate his fellow wicket-taker Siddle and contribute with the bat on the third day for South Africa to have their best chance of staying in the match. Like Australia with Clarke, South Africa have a specialist batsman at the crease and they want JP Duminy to build significantly on his 34.

"If we can maybe try and add another 70 that's going to take us around to lunch time, not only does that get us closer it also takes time out of the game," Arthur said. "We've got it all to do, really. We've got to find a way to get ourselves out of this situation."

Siddle, who picked up 3 for 24, will be searching for his first five-wicket haul and as a tail-wagger himself he knows the importance of wrapping up the innings rapidly. "Those 10 or 20 extra overs that [South Africa were] out in the field is just a little bit more tired legs and little bit more frustrated they get," Siddle said. "It can put the pressure on the top-order batsmen that do have to come in."



Aston Villa defender Zat Knight (R) is overjoyed after scoring the equaliser to make it 2-2 against Arsenal during their Premier League tie at Villa Park on Friday.

Wilkins warns rivals

AFP, London



Ray Wilkins expects Chelsea to see in 2009 in style after watching them dispatch West Bromwich Albion 2-0.

Victory left the Blues just a point behind Premier League leaders Liverpool and they could end the year top of the table if they beat west London rivals Fulham on Sunday and the Reds slip up against Newcastle.

Chelsea hardly had to break sweat in sweeping aside Tony Mowbray's bottom-of-the-table team, cruising to victory here at Stamford Bridge on Friday thanks to an early strike from Didier Drogba and Frank Lampard's

effort in first-half injury time.

A polished performance suggested Chelsea have banished the doubts which have bedevilled them at Stamford Bridge for much of the campaign.

Wilkins, the Blues assistant manager, has warned the club's title rivals to expect more of the same in the New Year, when Chelsea hope to welcome back several key players.

Drogba is set to feature more regularly for Luiz Felipe Scolari's side, having made just two league starts in an injury and suspension-ravaged season, and is likely to be unleashed again at Fulham.

Defender Ricardo Carvalho, meanwhile, has been pencilled in to return for the FA Cup tie with Southampton on 3 January after recovering

from injury.

With new signings also expected to arrive in the January transfer window - CSKA Moscow striker Wagner Love is a long-standing target - Chelsea could soon be back to their formidable best - a prospect which excites Wilkins.

"Competition is what big clubs are all about," said former Chelsea captain Wilkins.

"The competition is already there to a great extent but that will rise even more as players return and that will help the performance levels rise."

"It's vitally important to have everyone fit and firing. The squad is fuller now than it has been for most of the time this season and that gives us lots of options to explore all over the pitch."

Aussie bar on Zim officials

AFP, Sydney

Zimbabwe's top cricket administrators have been included in an expanded list of officials of President Robert Mugabe's regime targeted by Australian sanctions, a report said Saturday.

The president of Zimbabwe Cricket, Peter Chingoka, and chief executive Ozias Bvute, have been banned from visiting Australia or having any financial dealings with the country, the Sydney Morning Herald reported.

Chingoka is a full voting member of the International Cricket Council (ICC) executive board and the visa ban may force the ICC to change its plans to hold an executive board meeting in Perth next year, it said.

Australia announced earlier this month that it had added 75 individuals and four companies to a list of Mugabe regime members and supporters facing sanctions, but details were only made public this week.

The additions bring the total number of individuals on the list to 254 as Australia presses Mugabe to stand down, accusing his regime of brutal human rights offences.

Zimbabwe has been in political limbo since elections in March and the failure to implement a power-sharing deal signed on September 15, while the economy reels under inflation last estimated at 231 million percent.

Siddle sizzles

FROM PAGE 17
discomfort for the visitors, who will look back at his innings as the first major turning point.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at stumps on the second day of the second Test between Australia and South Africa at the Melbourne Cricket Ground on Saturday:
AUSTRALIA: First innings (overnight 280 for 6)
Hayden c Duminy b Ntini 8
Katich b Steyn 54
Ponting c Amla b Harris 101
Hussey c Boucher b Steyn 0
Clarke not out 88
Symonds c Kallis b Morkel 27
Haddin c Smith b Ntini 40
Lee c Kallis b Steyn 21
Johnson b Steyn 0
Hauritz c Smith b Steyn 12
Siddle c De Villiers b Kallis 19
Extras: (b-5, lb-12, nb-7) 24
Total: (All out in 113.4 overs) 394
Fall of wickets: 1-21, 2-128, 3-143, 4-184, 5-223, 6-277, 7-322, 8-326, 9-352, 10-394.

Bowler O M R W
Steyn 29 6 87 5
Ntini 27 7 108 2
Kallis 18.4 4 55 1
Morkel 22 3 89 1
Harris 17 3 38 1
SOUTH AFRICA: First innings
Smith c Haddin b Siddle 62
McKenzie b Siddle 0
Amla c Symonds b Johnson 19
Kallis c Haddin b Hauritz 26
De Villiers b Siddle 7
Duminy not out 34
Boucher c Hussey b Hauritz 3
Morkel b Johnson 21
Harris not out 8
Extras: (lb-4, nb-14) 18
Total: (For 7 wks in 63 overs) 198
To bat: Steyn, Ntini.
Fall of wickets: 1-1, 2-39, 3-102, 4-126, 5-132, 6-141, 7-184.

Bowler O M R W
Lee 13 2 68 0
Siddle 13 3 24 3
Johnson 17 3 53 2
Hauritz 20 6 49 2

Motto look

FROM PAGE 17
six but with Samaraweera around, nobody really should have been worried.

Yesterday's 90-run knock brought back memories of his 138 made against Bangladesh at Colombo's P Sara Stadium in 2005, made at a time when Sri Lanka were really struggling at 48 for four. He added 280 for the fifth wicket with Tillakaratne Dilshan. The Tigers lost that match by an innings and 69 runs.

While he had no Dilshan to partner him on this occasion, the ever-reliable Chaminda Vaas helped him rescue a dire situation by adding 99 for the seventh wicket and that gave the Lankan bowlers something to bowl at.

L'pool look to end year on top

AFP, London



Liverpool will finish 2008 on top of the Premier League if they beat Newcastle on Sunday.

But they know any slip-ups could be punished by second-placed Chelsea, just a point off the lead, who face Fulham.

On Friday, Chelsea had the chance to apply some pressure by beating bottom-of-the-table West Bromwich Albion 2-0 in an early kick-off match.

Liverpool responded with a 3-0 Boxing Day win over Bolton at Anfield.

However, roles will be reversed on Sunday with Liverpool's match away to Newcastle at St James' Park starting two hours before the west London derby at Craven Cottage gets underway.

Liverpool haven't been crowned champions of England since 1990 but hopes are rising in the red half of Merseyside that this might be

their season.

"Being top is important, but this club prepares to be top of the league, not fifth, sixth or seventh," said assistant manager Sammy Lee, who won several titles as a player with Liverpool in the 1980s.

"We are where we want to be at this moment in time."

"This is a long, hard campaign, though. It's nice going into the New Year in this position, but we go to Newcastle on Sunday and that will be a very difficult task for us."

Reigning champions Manchester United, in their first domestic match since winning the Club World Cup in Japan, stayed seven points off top spot Friday, with two games in hand, after winning 1-0 away to Stoke City.

But it was a frustrating day for the other member of the 'Big Four' as Arsenal surrendered a two-goal lead in stoppage-time in a 2-2 draw away to Aston Villa, the Midlands retaining their place amongst the leading quartet.

Earlier, Manchester City moved out of the bottom three

with a spectacular 5-1 win over Hull.

Their victory was an ideal response to fellow strugglers West Ham's 4-1 win over Portsmouth earlier in the day.

Wigan beat Newcastle 2-1 while Everton defeated Middlesbrough 1-0.

The London derby between Fulham and Tottenham and Sunderland's game against Blackburn both ended in goalless draws.

FIXTURES

(1500GMT unless stated)
Sunday
Arsenal v Portsmouth (1400GMT), Blackburn v Manchester City (1615GMT), Bolton v Wigan (1400GMT), Everton v Sunderland (1400GMT), Fulham v Chelsea (1400GMT), Newcastle v Liverpool (1200GMT), West Brom v Tottenham, West Ham v Stoke (1400GMT)
Monday
Manchester United v Middlesbrough (2000GMT)
Tuesday
Hull v Aston Villa (2000GMT)

FA may probe Wenger

Football

AFP, Birmingham

Arsene Wenger may be facing a request from the Football Association (FA) to explain his comments following Arsenal's 2-2 draw with Aston Villa after he effectively accused officials from the home club of influencing referee Lee Mason during the half-time interval.

The French manager and his counterpart Martin O'Neill were also involved in an angry verbal exchange across the technical areas during the second-half at Villa Park here Friday.

They had to be separated by the fourth official although neither manager received any punishment.

But Wenger's coded accusation that members of the Villa backroom staff spoke with Mason, when Arsenal were leading 1-0 through Denilson's goal, may well be placed under closer scrutiny as it could be viewed as an accusation that Villa had behaved improperly.

"I know exactly how it works here," Wenger said after seeing his side give up a 2-0 lead.

"At half-time the referee gets stick and in the second half, every 50-50 decision went to them."

"I decided to wait and see what happened after half-time and I was not disappointed. It is not only at Villa where it happens. I don't feel the need to elaborate any more."

Tie-breaker vexes Dan

Cricket

AFP, Hamilton

New Zealand captain Daniel Vettori wants tie-breakers banished from Twenty20 cricket after his side were belted into submission by the West Indies in their opening limited-over international.

"What's wrong with a tie, I have no issues with it," Vettori said Saturday, on the eve of the second and final Twenty20 match between New Zealand and the West Indies in Hamilton.

When the first match in Auckland on Friday ended in a tie at 155-all the teams were forced to play a one-over "eliminator" involving three batsmen and one bowler to decide the winner.

West Indies captain Chris Gayle belted Vettori for 25, including three sixes, in his over while New Zealand were out for 15 after four balls.

The only previous Twenty20 clash between the two teams in 2006 also ended in a tie and was won by New Zealand after a "bowl-off" where bowlers needed to hit unguarded stumps.

But, Vettori did not believe it was necessary to break a deadlock in an international.

"I think a tie's a tie," he said.

"I understand the appeal of it (an eliminator). I suppose if you're sitting on the

other side of a win you might enjoy it.

"(But) The game's called Twenty20, it's not called One1. We don't want to dilute it too much."

Gayle, who quipped after the first match that "it was a good one-over game", again threatens to be the central figure in the second encounter.

His man-of-the-match performance in Auckland included a bowling spell in which he took two for 16 and a whirlwind 67 off 41 balls with the bat before sealing the issue 25 runs in the play-off over.

New Zealand meanwhile will be without limited overs specialist Scott Styris who will miss the remaining matches against the West Indies because of a broken thumb.

All-rounder Styris was injured during his short-lived knock of 21 from 12 balls on Friday when he was rapped on the hand by a delivery from Fidel Edwards.

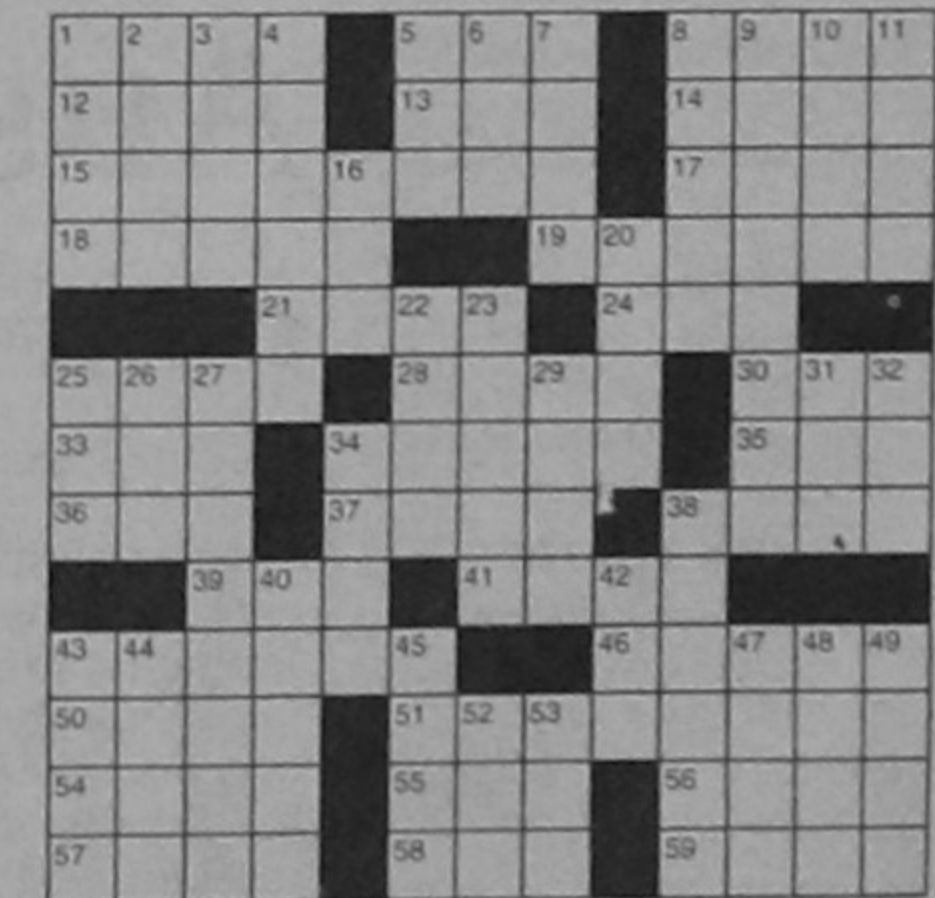
The New Zealand management said Styris was to have a pin inserted in his right thumb.

There would be no replacement added to the squad for Sunday's match, opening the way for either the uncapped Ewen Thompson or Friday's 12th man Mark Gillespie to make the starting XI.

After the second Twenty20 the teams move to Queenstown to start a five-match one-day international series.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 Cowe (Abb.)
5 Chewers
8 Cinema
12 Sandwich
13 Lopsida
14 Out of
15 Music
25 Lotion
28 Colorado
30 Pair
33 Moo goo
34 Lotion
35 Once
36 And so on
37 Secular
38 Crooked
39 Eminent
41 Burn
43 Chefs
44 French
55 Rowing
56 It can be
57 Earthen
58 Thickness
59 Mop
60 Cautious
61 Channel
62 Language
63 War of the
64 Pakistan
65 Credit
66 Card
67 Isolator's
68 Result
69 Origin
70 Parcel of
71 Cowo
72 Nightingale
73 Site
74 Caesar's
75 You Bet
76 Your Life
77 Host
78 Red
79 In the
80 Sunset
81 Rabbit's
82 Cousin
83 Mole
84 Brocko-
85 War of
86 Wall St.
87 Initials
88 Combine
89 Resources
90 Cease
91 Chew
92 Persia-
93 sently
94 Trans-
95 seeding
96 (Pref.)
97 Bedouin
98 Actor
99 Kilmer
100 Parched



CRYPTOQUIP

U QLTULYL PIL EGPCTF ILYLV
GUZBGGUJL MKZLV FMVJ.
DPC BPCTF EMD UZ'E QLLI
RD VCTL PK ZGCRQ.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: AFTER YOU'VE HAD SEVERAL ADULT BEVERAGES ON A FLIGHT, YOU'LL PROBABLY BE FEELING NO PLANE.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: G equals H