

Wawrinka KO Federer

Tennis

AFP, Monte Carlo

Roger Federer was free to enjoy the rest of his honeymoon Thursday after being knocked out of the rain-lashed Monte Carlo Masters by compatriot, and Olympic gold medal-winning partner, Stanislas Wawrinka.

World number two Federer, without a title in 2009 and desperately short of form and confidence, went down 6-4, 7-5 to the 13th seed in the third round.

Novak Djokovic will line up against Swiss Stan Wawrinka in a Monte Carlo Open semifinal after both advanced Friday on a day of catch-up following a rain-delay crisis left over from Thursday.

Wawrinka maintained his level after stunning Davis Cup teammate and good friend Roger Federer in the third round, advancing on his second match point over Beck, ranked 89th.

Third seed Djokovic, fighting to maintain his place in the ATP rankings under heavy pressure from hard-charging Scot Andy Murray, advanced over Spanish seventh seed Fernando Verdasco 6-2, 4-6, 6-3.

"The courts were really wet, even today you could feel it," said the winner. "The balls were getting bald and really fast. It was tough to control, but overall I played really well."

"Today was a really good test, a really good match for me. I hung in there and just waited for my chances."

Wawrinka, the number 13, beat German qualifier Andreas Beck 6-2, 6-4 and will be aiming for revenge against Djokovic after losing to the Serb three times in 2008.

Their last meeting came in the final of Rome 11 months ago, Wawrinka's finest week on court.

Top seed Rafael Nadal and number four Murray were facing a double workload on the day after wrapping up rain-halted matches from overnight.

King of clay Nadal won his 24th straight match on the Monte Carlo clay with a 6-3, 6-0 rout of Ecuadorian Nicolas Lapentti. Nadal is seeking his fifth straight title at the Country Club overlooking the Mediterranean.

Nadal was next up against Croatian Ivan Ljubicic, a winner over Italy's Simone Bolelli 7-5, 7-6 (7/2).

Murray finished his own job to reach his first career quarterfinal on clay as he defeated Italian Fabio Fognini 7-6 (13/11), 6-4. The Scot aims for even further improvement on his

weakest surface with a quarterfinal date with Nikolay Davydenko, who put out David Nalbandian 6-4, 5-7, 6-3.

Djokovic has earned his place against Spaniards this week, with Verdasco having been his third Iberian opponent in succession.

The Serb will be playing in his second consecutive Monte Carlo semifinal after retiring with illness against Roger Federer last year.

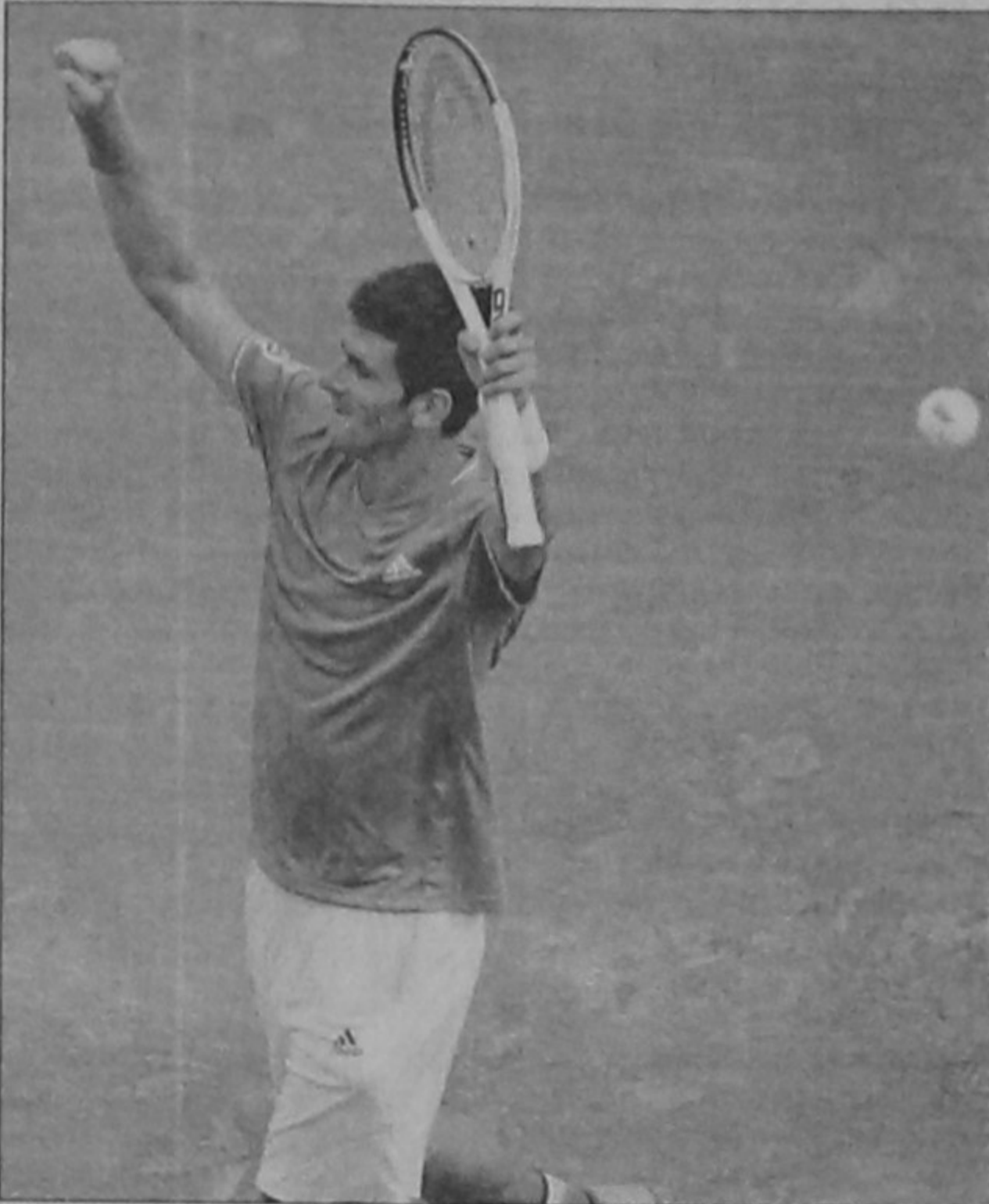


PHOTO: AFP

Serbia star Novak Djokovic celebrates his victory over Fernando Verdasco of Spain during their Monte Carlo Masters Series in Monaco on Friday. Djokovic won 6-2, 4-6, 6-3.

Heavy fines await late teams

PTI, Cape Town

Heavy fines ranging from USD 20,000 to USD 360,000 await captains and teams which fail to bowl their 20 overs inside stipulated time during the Indian Premier League starting here on Saturday.

Each team will get 80 minutes to bowl its 20 overs with breaks of seven and a half minutes each after every 10 overs in the matches that will last for three hours and 15 minutes.

Failure to complete the overs in time at first would invite a USD 20,000 fine for the captain, the 'Beeld' newspaper reported, quoting IPL chairman Lalit Modi.

A second transgression would lead to a USD 220,000 fine for the entire team, while a third offence will mean a USD 360,000 fine and a one-match suspension for the captain.

The IPL starts at Newlands on Saturday with Chennai Super Kings taking on Mumbai Indians, followed by a clash between Bangalore Royal Challengers and defending champions Rajasthan Royals.

Australia 303/7

FROM PAGE 17

Australia
Haddin c Duminy b Morkel 62
Clarke c Duminy b Van der Merwe 66
Ponting c Van der Merwe b Duminy 40
Ferguson c De Villiers b Van der Merwe 41
Hussey not out 49
Hussey st Boucher b Duminy 3
Hopes run out 3
Johnson c b Duminy 2
Hauritz not out 24
Extras: (b-1, lb-3, w-9) 13
Total: (For 7 wickets in 50 overs) 303
To bat: Laughlin, Bracken.
Fall of wickets: 1-127, 2-138, 3-192, 4-223, 5-231, 6-238, 7-246.

Bowler O M R W
Steyn 10 0 73 0
Ntini 6 0 48 0
Morkel 8 1 41 0
Kallis 2 0 21 0
Morkel 4 0 24 1
Van der Merwe 10 0 44 2
Duminy 10 0 48 3

Tigers eager

FROM PAGE 17

His national team deputy Mashrafe Bin Mortaza has good chance to play the opening match for his side when Kolkata Knight Riders take on Deccan Chargers tomorrow at Cape Town.

"I'm looking forward to play the first match. I played three practice matches and everything is fine here. Hopefully it will be a good tournament for me and I will be able to lift my country's image," said Mashrafe, who was roped in by superstar Shahrukh Khan's side after a dramatic bid where he was bought for 600,000 dollars.

The Bangladesh vice-captain has yet to put pen to paper but said that he was little bothered with the signing.

"I think it would not be a problem and things (like this) happen sometimes," said Mashrafe.

Booters

FROM PAGE 17

keeper Aminul Haque, reached the Nepalese capital on Thursday afternoon and practiced at the match venue yesterday.

Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) vice-president and the team leader Badal Roy informed that all the players are in good health.

The match has been arranged as part of the build up for the AFC Challenge Cup qualifiers that begins in Dhaka on April 26.

Bangladesh have been drawn in Group A in the tournament along with Myanmar, Cambodia and Macau.

SQUAD

Aminul (captain), Biplab, Nasir, Wali, Mishu, Rashed, Rajani, Sujat, Saikat, Mamun, Arman, Sharif, Pranotosh, Manik, Zahed Parvez, Mamunul, Munna, Emon, Enamul and Mithun.

Four qualify

FROM PAGE 17

Afghanistan as they came sixth behind Scotland, giving both ODI status for the next four years and automatic entry to the 2009-2010 Intercontinental Cup.

Afghanistan completed their Super 8 fixtures with a 21-run win over Namibia in Krugersdorp while Scotland clicked after a series of dismal displays to defeat the United Arab Emirates by 122 runs in Benoni.

Bangladesh, India and Sri Lanka will stage the World Cup during February and March 2011 after co-hosts Pakistan were dropped by the International Cricket Council Friday over security concerns.

UAE finished seventh and Namibia last on the standings.

Fortunate Kiwis

AFP, Wellington



A year ago in New Zealand, where cricket struggles to make a dollar, players would have scoffed at suggestions they could earn a fortune from playing a handful of Twenty20 games.

But along came the mega-wealth of the Indian Premier League (IPL), turning New Zealand cricket upside down with an immense power that stretched beyond the Twenty20 circuit.

In a country which has a small talent pool to begin with, some players were excused national duties to play for the IPL while others were barred from Test cricket for signing with the rival Indian Cricket League (ICL).

"You want your national team to include the very best players and I think it's quite clear we haven't been able to do that in recent times," New Zealand Cricket chief executive Justin Vaughan said.

The handful of players who signed for the first IPL series last year were freed from New Zealand's warm-up games before the Test series in England so they could make money in India.

The five were paid on a pro-rata basis, meaning Brendon McCullum, who signed with the Kolkata Knight Riders for 700,000 US dollars, earned a reported 155,000 dollars for a fortnight's work.

He then joined his poorer teammates in England who earned much less than that in a year for New Zealand.

Meanwhile, the one bowler of genuine international pace and quality, Shane Bond,

was told he could not play for New Zealand again because he signed for the rival ICL.

"There were lots of politics going on in the background," said Bond who maintained he signed after being told it would not affect his Test status.

Cricket great Sachin Tendulkar was barred by India from playing in an exhibition match with former New Zealand and Australian internationals before the recent ODI and Test series here because former ICL player Hamish Marshall was included.

It was suggested New Zealand drop Marshall so Tendulkar could have time in the middle but this was rejected.

The power of the IPL money has also seen cynics ring talk radio stations to suggest a link to the return to fitness of injury-prone allrounder Jacob Oram who missed the Indian Tests because of an Achilles strain.

Oram bristled at the suggestion he was saving himself for the lucrative league and pledged not to fulfil his 675,000 US dollar contract with the Super Kings if he could not play in New Zealand's domestic championship final.

"I can understand people thinking I'm cotton-wooling myself but I'll definitely take myself out (of the IPL) if I don't get through the final," Oram said.

But it is not all about money for New Zealand batsman Ross Taylor who was delighted when the series was moved from India to South Africa over security concerns.

"If you're dead you can't earn any money. Life's obviously more important than earning cash," he said.

Ganguly ignored as captain

FROM PAGE 17

"The Knight Riders have been in the news lately for the four-captain theory. We have been with our coach who explained to us on how to go about these things," Gayle wrote in his column for the Times of India.

"It's worth a try and something new to everyone."

Current cricketers and former players like Sunil Gavaskar have been sceptical of the concept since it was announced by Buchanan at a press conference in Kolkata last month in the presence of Ganguly, who led the team last year. Ganguly later said he was not fully convinced about the idea and his teammate Ishant Sharma also expressed doubts over the concept. Buchanan

said his theory had been misunderstood by many people and clarified that he will "not select a squad captain but will select a captain for each match."

Gayle was unable to play the IPL last year as he was sidelined with a groin injury but managed to spend time with the squad. In this edition, he will be available only for the first few weeks before heading to England to play a Test series.

"Hopefully we can build on the good spirit and make a good start this time around and take it from there. It was very disappointing last season watching from the sidelines. I did not want to brood too much last time on missing out because it was just a matter of time."

He also concurred with

Shane Warne's view that the ICC needs to find a window for the IPL in the international calendar to allow international players like himself to commit to the entire tournament.

Former Pakistan captain Javed Miandad has dismissed John Buchanan's multiple-captain theory, calling it nothing but a 'joke'.

Miandad said the former Australia coach's unique theory has nothing to do with serious cricket. "I see it as a joke, nothing more. How can you have three or four different captains of one team in one tournament? Does a country have four prime ministers and four presidents?" Miandad said.

No World Cup

FROM PAGE 17

However, the Lahore attack seemed to have sealed their fate on hosting the World Cup.

The attack itself also came up for discussion at the meeting, with match referee Chris Broad, who was on duty for the Test, and Sri Lanka's Mahela Jayawardene (via telephone) giving their version of what happened.

It was decided that Lord Condon, chairman of the ICC's Anti-Corruption and Security Unit, would lead a task team - including ICC chief executive Haroon Lorgat and directors Jack Clarke and Shashank Manohar - would conduct a review of security arrangements for all international cricket.

The review, Lorgat said, would include an assessment of whether current security protocols employed by ICC Members were adequate and, if not, how they could be improved. It would also, if necessary, approach other sports to see if there was scope for information-sharing in the way security is conducted across major events around the world.

Parade wakes

FROM PAGE 17

drawn from fans attending matches.

The idea came from IPL commissioner Lalit Modi, who has employed the help of the three Bollywood idols associated with the tournament.

"We're looking for someone who has the star quality to stand out in a crowd, probably without even trying that hard," Modi explained at the launch of the concept in Cape Town.

"It's that special, almost indefinable, quality that makes someone a star more than a beauty queen that we are looking for."

"IPL matches with their mix of fun and excitement are an excellent environment to identify the kind of person who is a natural stand-out in a big crowd."

One Miss Bollywood of the Day will be found at each of the 56 round-robin matches and stands a chance of winning a trip to India, a role in a Bollywood film and 5,590 dollars.

"Star searches like this are a really great way to find people who may never even have thought that they have what it takes to really make it big," said Khan, the so-called 'King of Bollywood'.

"The heart of our idea is to search the crowd at IPL matches for someone who has the attitude and appearance that automatically draws the eye."

"It will be the kind of person who is not necessarily showing off for the camera, but who can mesmerise even total strangers."

"The announcement of the winner will be shown during a 'strategy break' and will be declared Miss Bollywood of the Day."



Did U Know?

The International Badminton Federation (IBF) was founded in 1934 with nine members and now has over 150 members.

Meet the IPL teams

FROM PAGE 17

Kolkata Knight Riders

Owners: Shah Rukh Khan and Juhi Chawla (Bollywood stars)
Coach: John Buchanan (AUS)
Captain: Not named

Foreign players: Ajantha Mendis (SRI), Angelo Mathews (SRI), Brad Hodge (AUS), Brendan McCullum (NZL), Chris Gayle (WIS), David Hussey (AUS), Mark Cameron (AUS), Mashrafe Mortaza (BAN), Moises Henriques (AUS).

India stars: Sourav Ganguly, Aakash Chopra, Ishant Sharma, Murali Kartik, Sanjay Bangar.

Kings XI Punjab

Owners: Ness Wadia (businessman), Preity Zinta (Bollywood star), Mohit Burman (businessman), Karan Paul (businessman).
Coach: Tom Moody (AUS)
Captain: Yuvraj Singh (IND)

Foreign players: Brett Lee (AUS), Burt Cockley (AUS), James Hopes (AUS), Kumar Sangakkara (SRI), Luke Pomersbach (AUS), Mahela Jayawardene (SRI), Ravi Bopara (ENG), Shaun Marsh (AUS), Simon Katich (AUS), Jerome Taylor (WIS).

India stars: Yuvraj Singh, Irfan Pathan, Piyush Chawla, Ramesh Powar, Shanthakumaran Sreesanth.

Chennai Super Kings

Owner: N. Srinivasan (businessman and Indian cricket board secretary)
Coach-player: Stephen

Fleming (NZL)

Captain: Mahendra Singh Dhoni (IND)

Foreign players: Albie Morkel (RSA), Andrew Flintoff (ENG), George Bailey (AUS), Makhaya Ntini (RSA), Matthew Hayden (AUS), Muttiah Muralitharan (SRI), Stephen Fleming (NZL), Thilan Thushara (SRI).

India stars: Mahendra Singh Dhoni, Joginder Sharma, Lakshmiipathy Balaji, Murali Vijay, Parthiv Patel, Suresh Raina.

Delhi Daredevils

Owners: GMR Holdings (Indian business house)
Coach: Greg Shipperd (AUS)
Captain: Virender Sehwag (IND)

Foreign players: AB de Villiers (RSA), Andrew McDonald (AUS), Daniel Vettori (NZL), David Warner (AUS), Dirk Nannes (AUS), Farveez Maharoof (SRI), Glenn McGrath (AUS), Owais Shah (ENG), Paul Collingwood (ENG), Tillakaratne Dilshan (SRI).

Rajasthan Royals

Owners: Emerging Media group (Lachlan Murdoch, A.R. Jha and Suresh Chellaram), Shilpa Shetty (Bollywood star), Raj Kundra (Businessman).
Coach/captain: Shane Warne (AUS)

Foreign players: Shane Warne (AUS), Dimitri Mascarenhas (ENG), Graeme Smith (RSA), Lee Carse (AUS), Morne

Morkel (RSA), Robert Quiney (AUS), Shane Harwood (AUS), Shane Watson (AUS), Shaun Tait (AUS), Tyrone Henderson (RSA).

India stars: Mohammad Kaif, Munaf Patel, Ravindra Jadeja, Yusuf Pathan.

Mumbai Indians

Owner: Mukesh Ambani (industrialist)
Coach/mentor: Shaun Pollock (RSA)
Captain: Sachin Tendulkar (IND)

Foreign players: Dilhara Fernando (SRI), Dwayne Bravo (WIS), Graham Napier (ENG), Jean-Paul Duminy (RSA), Kyle Mills (NZL), Lasith Malinga (SRI), Luke Ronchi (AUS), Mohammad Ashraful (BAN), Ryan McLaren (RSA), Sanath Jayasuriya (SRI).

India stars: Sachin Tendulkar, Harbhajan Singh, Zaheer Khan.

Deccan Chargers

Owners: Deccan Chronicle (newspaper group)
Coach: Darren Lehmann (AUS)
Captain: Adam Gilchrist (AUS)

Foreign players: Adam Gilchrist (AUS), Andrew Symonds (AUS), Chamara Silva (SRI), Chaminda Vaas (SRI), Dwayne Smith (WIS), Fidel Edwards (WIS), Herschelle Gibbs (RSA), Nuwan Zoysa (SRI), Ryan Harris (AUS), Scott Styris (NZL).

India stars: Venkatesh Laxman, Pragyan Ojha, Rohit Sharma, Rudra Pratap Singh.

Royals' tough opener

FROM PAGE 17

spinner Shane Warne, will hope that Indian fast bowler Munaf Patel and South Africa's Morne Morkel can compensate for the loss of the two stars.

In contrast to the Royals, the Challengers spent big but achieved little in the first IPL, finishing seventh of the eight teams.

They are likely to be an improved side, however, with star English signing Kevin Pietersen leading the team in the only stages of the tournament and tough South African Ray Jennings cracking the whip as coach.

The Bangalore team will be boosted by the signing of Indian batsman Robin Uthappa, while South African fast bowler Dale Steyn is likely to be more effective on his

home country pitches than he was in India.

South African all-rounder Jacques Kallis and leading Indian batsman Rahul Dravid will be expected to improve on mediocre performances last time.

The battle between the Mumbai and Chennai franchises should get the tournament off to a cracking start.

Mumbai Indians will be led by Indian icon Sachin Tendulkar, who missed most of the first series because of injury.

Their squad had a pre-season training camp in South Africa under the direction of Shaun Pollock, appointed as team mentor, and fielding ace Jonty Rhodes.

With teams only able to field four non-Indian players,

Mumbai have a stronger core of Indian stars than some of their rivals, with Tendulkar and Test bowlers Zaheer Khan and Harbhajan Singh in their squad.

Overseas aces include Sri Lanka's Sanath Jayasuriya, West Indian Dwayne Bravo and South Africa's JP Duminy.

Chennai Super Kings were runners-up last year and will again provide a formidable challenge.

Led by the dynamic Indian captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni, they have been strengthened by the signing of England all-rounder Andrew Flintoff, who joins Australian batsman Matthew Hayden, South African all-rounder Albie Morkel and Sri Lanka spin bowler Muttiah Muralitharan in what looks a powerful squad.

Kaif given the boot

FROM PAGE 17

style of play and what he is capable of, unlike the new recruits who are yet to prove themselves. Hence he was surprised that in spite of knowing his game, the Royals dumped him at the last moment.

Kaif is believed to have sounded out the league's commissioner Lalit Modi to check if there is a possibility of him being able to play for any other team. However, unless an exception is made in Kaif's case it is an unlikely scenario. Kaif is still in Cape Town and is likely to return to India over the next couple of days.

Meanwhile, Royals captain Warne said that it was a 'horrible job' to drop Kaif and the rest of the players.

"One of the most difficult tasks has been to prune our squad from 27 to 18 players. That really was a horrible job and some of the guys were pretty emotional when I broke the bad news. You have to be straight and I told those who didn't make the cut that they could still have good careers," Warne wrote in his column for 'The Times'.

"Their reactions reminded me of how big the IPL has become in little over a year,"

he added.

Apart from this, Warne said the other major challenge has been to make his side's young Indian players, who have never travelled abroad, comfortable in South Africa which has been nothing short of a "cultural shock" for them.

"...The younger Indian guys in our squad are finding South Africa a bit of a culture shock. They've certainly been dragged out of their comfort zones. Some of them hadn't stepped out of their own country before, let alone played overseas."