

Imran liking T20 support

PTI, Karachi

Former Pakistan captain Imran Khan said T20 cricket being in its infancy it is hard to predict who will win the ICC World Twenty20 in England as no team appears to have a clear planning or strategy on how to approach this format of the game.

"At present the way I see it all the teams are just going with the flow and Twenty20 cricket is only about luck and taking chances. There is no science or planning in how the teams play this format of the game," Imran told reporters during a visit to Karachi.

"One can't make predictions in the present state of things because any team can win on its day. Everyone is just taking chances and if it pays off it looks good." He said when one-day cricket started in the early 70s it took time for the teams to understand the game and plan strategies.

"Just like that, Twenty20 cricket would also evolve with time and teams will start understanding the format better and play it accordingly," Imran said.

"I am sure this will happen with Twenty20 cricket as well but right now it is just 'Tullebaazi' (chance cricket)," he added.

Imran was happy that Twenty20 cricket has been a big hit with the public.

"It is good for the sport that so many people are now coming in to watch these matches."

England

FROM PAGE 17
Quick like his boyhood hero Wasim Akram, marked his international debut by removing Ravi Bopara but it needed a superb catch at backward point by Shoaib Malik to leave England nine for one.

Opener Luke Wright, who struck England's first six of the tournament, a pull off the 17-year-old Amir, kept the run-rate high in the overcast conditions by striking five fours in as many balls faced.

But a stand of 53 was ended when Umar Gul yorked Wright for 34.

Colly salutes

FROM PAGE 17
"If we didn't win we were out and that's notice."

"It was a huge evening - I was desperate to play, I've never had an injury that has kept me out which has been hard to deal with."

"I reckon I'm about 70 per cent fit. Hopefully, that is the last of it now because I just love playing. I am happy to play with a bunch of boys who played like they did this evening."

Petersen said he hoped the Dutch defeat would remain an aberration.

"That was a one off - we should never, ever have lost that game. It's not right to lose to the Netherlands."

Australia

FROM PAGE 17
innocent Tamils by the Sri Lankan armed forces in the war against the Tamil Tigers.

SCORES IN BRIEF

AUSTRALIA: 159 for 9 in 20 overs (D Hussey 28, Johnson 28 not out, Ponting 25, Watson 22, Haddin 16, Lee 15, Clarke 11; Mendis 3-20, Malinga 3-36, Uddappa 2-47)
SRI LANKA: 160 for 4 in 19 overs (55 not out, Dilshan 53, Mubarak 21, Silva 11; Lee 2-39)
Result: Sri Lanka won by 6 wickets.
Man-of-the-match: Kumar Sangakkara.

Upson warns against complacency

AFP, Watford



Matthew Upson has warned England not to let complacency ruin their chances of making a serious challenge to win the World Cup.

Fabio Capello's team are well placed to reach next year's finals in South Africa after storming to the top of Group Six with six successive wins.

They sit seven points clear of second-placed Croatia and a victory over Andorra on Wednesday would all but guarantee England's qualification.

But West Ham centre-back Upson, who is likely to partner John Terry at the heart of Capello's defence against the Andorrans at Wembley, knows England can't afford to rest on their laurels just yet.

"The team is progressing very well, you cannot deny that. However, as a team there is still a lot of things we can improve on. It is step by step," Upson said.

"We are going to need to get better to be able to win the World Cup by beating some of the best teams in the world."

"We're not there just yet. We've put ourselves in a strong position but we're still a couple of wins away from confirming that."

"We can't start taking our eye off the ball and looking ahead to next year just yet, but we are on the right track, so it is a positive time at the moment."

Upson expects Andorra to come to Wembley determined to frustrate England by getting men behind the ball and trying to rough up Capello's dangerous men.

It is the kind of game that often caused them to stumble during Steve McClaren's reign, but Capello has made England a much more sturdy unit.

Upson is confident that new-found mental strength will help them through any difficult moments.

"We will dominate a lot of the play but sometimes those sort of games as a defender are the hardest," he said.

"You can't get into any rhythm, you have long spells of the game without too much to deal with and then all of a sudden something happens so you have to try and stay focused. It's a different kind of test."

"We just have to focus on winning. We need to set out with the right mentality and

not be complacent.

"Everyone is training hard and competing to get in the team for Wednesday. Everyone's hungry so I can't see us being complacent."

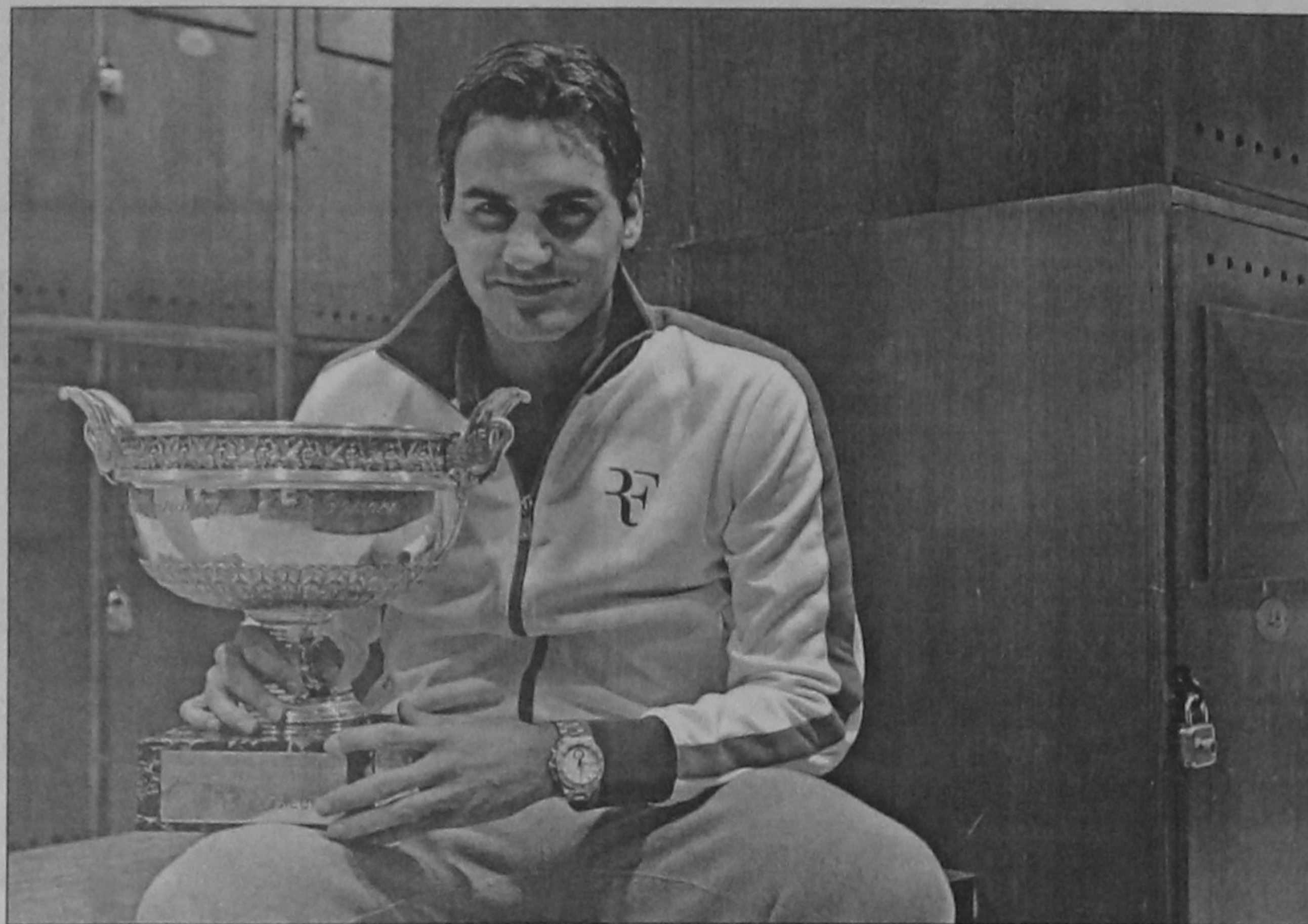
"If the team approaches it in the right way, which I'm sure we will, there's no reason why we can't get another positive result."

Although Upson is almost certain to lose his place once Rio Ferdinand returns from injury, he is determined to prove his credentials as the best alternative should either of Capello's first-choice centre-backs get injured again.

"It's been the best season of my career to date. I feel I've improved and developed well and I'm very positive about next season," he said.

"I'm really happy with the amount of games I've played (for England). I want to play as many games as I can."

"(Playing in the World Cup) would mean everything. It's something I've dreamt of for a long time and worked hard for over the last four or five years."



Swiss superstar Roger Federer poses with the winner's trophy in the change room of Roland Garros after beating Swedish Robin Soderling in the French Open final in Paris on Sunday.

More to come: Federer

AFP, Paris



Roger Federer, with a first French Open and a career Grand Slam carved into his story-book of achievements, believes he is poised for another record-setting spell, with time stacked in his favour.

The Swiss maestro realised a lifetime dream of finally lifting a Roland Garros title to become only the sixth man in history to win all four majors with his 6-1, 7-6 (7/1), 6-4 victory over Robin Soderling equalling Pete Sampras's record of 14 Grand Slam trophies.

But Federer, who is not 28 until August, vowed there is more to come, with his professional ambition fuelled further by his private life soon to be enriched by wife Mirka bearing their first child.

Federer, acutely aware of the history of the sport, knows that Sampras was four years older, at 31, when he won his last Grand Slam title at the US Open in 2002.

Andre Agassi was already 29 when he won in Paris in 1999 to become the fifth

man to complete the Grand Slam.

The colourful American, who presented the French Open trophy to Federer on Sunday, won the last major of his career, his eighth in total, at the Australian Open in 2003 when he was 33.

Agassi was still reaching Grand Slam finals at 35, when he lost the 2005 US Open final to Federer.

The Swiss also knows that more majors will only serve to finish, once and for all, arguments over who is the greatest player of all time.

"I just tried to have the best possible career I can. I think it should be judged at the very end. How well did I do? Good? Great? Very good? Or medium? It's for other people to decide," said Federer.

"Right now, I'm still playing. I haven't retired, and I think I still have many more tournaments to go and many more Grand Slams."

"I'll give it my best shot to have the best possible career."

"I hope I can maintain the records I have and I hope to break some other ones along the way. I hope to stay healthy. That's most important because motiva-

tion and drive is not a problem for me."

Next Grand Slam stop for Federer will be the All England Club from June 22 where he will attempt to win back the Wimbledon title he had held for five years until Rafael Nadal took it back to Spain last year.

Nadal, who had defeated Federer in the last three finals in Paris, had himself been knocked out in the fourth round here by Soderling.

The world number one, so long Federer's nemesis, is now a doubt for Wimbledon because of a knee injury, a factor that only serves to boost the new French Open champion's outlook on life and career.

"If I had to retire tomorrow I would be happy because I feel like I've put everything out there," added Federer.

"I always said it doesn't matter when I retire, I'll be at peace. I can walk away from this game tomorrow, but I don't choose to because I love this game too much."

"Tennis is not forever; I know that. But I'll try to definitely enjoy it as long as I can."

Heskey backs Rooney

Football

AFP, Watford

England forward Emile Heskey believes Wayne Rooney can fire Fabio Capello's team to World Cup glory in South Africa.

For the second time in his England career, Heskey is the foil for one of the world's best strikers and the Aston Villa star is convinced his partnership with Rooney can be even better than the relationship he established with Michael Owen.

It was Heskey's muscular presence that allowed Owen to thrive during Sven Goran Eriksson's reign. After a spell in international exile, Heskey was brought back into the fold by Fabio Capello because the England coach felt his selfless style would give Rooney room to flourish.

Capello's decision has already paid dividends. Rooney's goal in Saturday's 4-0 victory over Kazakhstan was the Manchester United player's eighth in six games for his country, while Heskey netted his second in two matches.

Heskey has never been one to blow his own trumpet but he is willing to express his admiration of Rooney and makes a convincing case for his team-mate to make a major impact in next year's World Cup finals.

"Wayne Rooney is a great player. He has shown it on many occasions for his club and for England as well," Heskey said.

"He is up there with the best in terms of his ability. He can play in different positions and do great jobs. That shows how good he is."

Heskey and Rooney have one final chance to fine-tune their partnership before heading off for

their close-season holidays when England host Andorra on Wednesday.

Group Six leaders England are already within touching distance of the finals and a victory at Wembley would all but cement their place, but Heskey insists there is no chance of complacency creeping into the squad.

"No, we're not thinking about South Africa. The lads are very focused on the games. We want to keep going," Heskey said.

"It's going to be a difficult game after coming back from Kazakhstan on a long flight but we are very focused on getting the right result."

"The lads are really focused on the game. It's the last game (of the season), and it's at home so we are very confident and set on what we have to achieve."

Heskey has extra motivation to help England achieve their goal of qualification after failing to make the squad for the 2006 World Cup.

The former Liverpool targetman's international adventure seemed to be over when he was cast adrift by Eriksson, but he insists he never gave up hope.

"No, never," he said. "You just have to focus on playing well for your club. Once you've done that, you don't know what's going to happen."

"I got a taste of it, and I'm enjoying it now. I want to go to every tournament with England."

While Heskey is enjoying his combination with Rooney, he could get a chance to rekindle his relationship with Owen as well if reports that the Newcastle star is set for a move to Villa prove true.

"It would be nice. Obviously Michael is a great player. He has shown that on many occasions," Heskey said. "He's been knocked and always got back up and performed."

Smith sounds caution

AFP, London



South Africa captain Graeme Smith said his side had "sent a message" after their crushing 130-run win over Scotland at the ICC World Twenty20.

Victory in their first match of the tournament saw the Proteas into the second round Super Eights and provided a textbook display of how a Test side ought to deal with one of the minnow nations at this event.

The tournament began in dramatic style on Friday with hosts England losing off the last ball to the Netherlands at Lord's while Saturday saw Scotland give New Zealand a scare in a match reduced by rain to seven overs per side.

But led by AB de Villiers's blistering 79 not out, featuring six sixes, South Africa piled up a huge total of 211 for five here at the Oval.

Fast bowler Dale Steyn then struck early on and when Scotland were bowled out for 81 they'd suffered the second heaviest defeat suffered by any side in a Twenty20 international - Sri Lanka beat Kenya by 172 runs during the inaugural World Twenty20 in Johannesburg two years ago.

"We probably had a few more nerves after watching the first few days of the tournament and seeing a few of the unpredictable results," said Smith, who shared a first-wicket stand of 87 with Jacques Kallis.

"It was important to send a message and we did that."

Scotland captain Gavin Hamilton admitted his largely part-time team had been given some object lessons, especially by the Proteas' batsmen.

"They are an absolutely fantastic outfit," ex-England all-rounder Hamilton said. "They didn't give any breathing space at all. It is a reality check."

"The clean striking of the ball was just outstanding. You don't really appreciate it until you are in that fielding ring listening to the sound off the bat."

Defeat saw Scotland - who failed this year to qualify for the 2011 World Cup in Asia - bow out of the tournament.

Hamilton, who said a national academy ought to be providing younger players for the Scotland side, admitted there was a danger of an unbridgeable gap opening up.

"We've had eight days together and we are playing against the world's best cricket teams but unless we chug along behind them we will get left behind," Hamilton said.

South Africa is likely to face a far sterner test from New Zealand at Lord's on Monday and Smith said: "We've played against New Zealand enough to know they are tough competitors, and on their day they can challenge and beat anybody. We will respect them as we would any opponent."

He added: "The big focus for us is playing to our intensity, and playing our game. If we can do that, we can challenge any team in this tournament."

South Africa's batting, as evidenced by their opening stand and the way 83 runs were scored off the final five overs, has both depth and variety.

"We have got good players in both areas," said Smith. "It is about finding a balance between the touch players and the power players."

Foreign teams seek Roy

Cricket

AFP, Sydney

Wayward all-rounder Andrew Symonds has overseas offers to consider as he mulls over whether to continue playing in Australia, his manager said Monday.

The international playing career of Symonds is in doubt after Cricket Australia sent him from the World Twenty20 tournament in England last week after another alcohol-related indiscretion.

His Queensland state wants him to continue playing for them in the domestic competitions, but he has received English and South African offers on top of his lucrative Indian Premier League contract, which has another year to run.

Symonds' manager, Matt Fearon, confirmed that the unpredictable all-rounder, who turns 34 on Tuesday, was keen to play on despite Cricket

Australia indicating it will withdraw his 2009-10 contract.

Fearon said Symonds had "numerous" teams looking to contract him, including English counties and South African provinces.

"It's fair to say he's constantly sought after from many regions, both prior to this happening and currently," Fearon said on Monday.

"They're areas we haven't explored before because he's always been focused on playing international cricket."

"They're options for him if he chooses to do that."

Fearon said Symonds, who arrived home from England on Saturday, is seeking advice from family and friends as he weighs up his future.

Fearon said the most important aspect for Symonds was to play in an environment with "like-minded" people after feeling out of place in the current Australian team set-up.

Symonds was a success in

the IPL, helping the Deccan Chargers to the Twenty20 title in South Africa last month under the stewardship of former Test teammates Darren Lehmann and Adam Gilchrist.

"At this stage his focus is to surround himself with people he enjoys and support him and have the right influence on him," Fearon said.

"As far as where the Australian team is headed and the culture within, that's changed significantly and he's no longer a good fit there."

"Queensland Cricket have been a big part of his career and are supporting him now and would be an avenue for him as well."

Bangladesh

FROM PAGE 17

A total of 24 Bangladeshi players are taking part in the 10-round Swiss-League tournament which got underway on Sunday.

Qadir quits

FROM PAGE 17

"Qadir has tendered his resignation to the chairman of the PCB, who has accepted," PCB spokesman Raza Rashid told AFP.

Qadir, who assumed charge in October last year, was apparently unhappy over the inclusion of paceman Rao Iftikhar as a replacement for injured Shoaib Akhtar in Pakistan's World Twenty20 squad.

Pakistan lost to England by 48 runs in their opening match of the tournament at the Oval - a defeat that jeopardised their chances of progressing to the Super Eight stages.

Pakistan must now beat the Netherlands on Tuesday by a big margin to sneak into the next round on net run-rate.

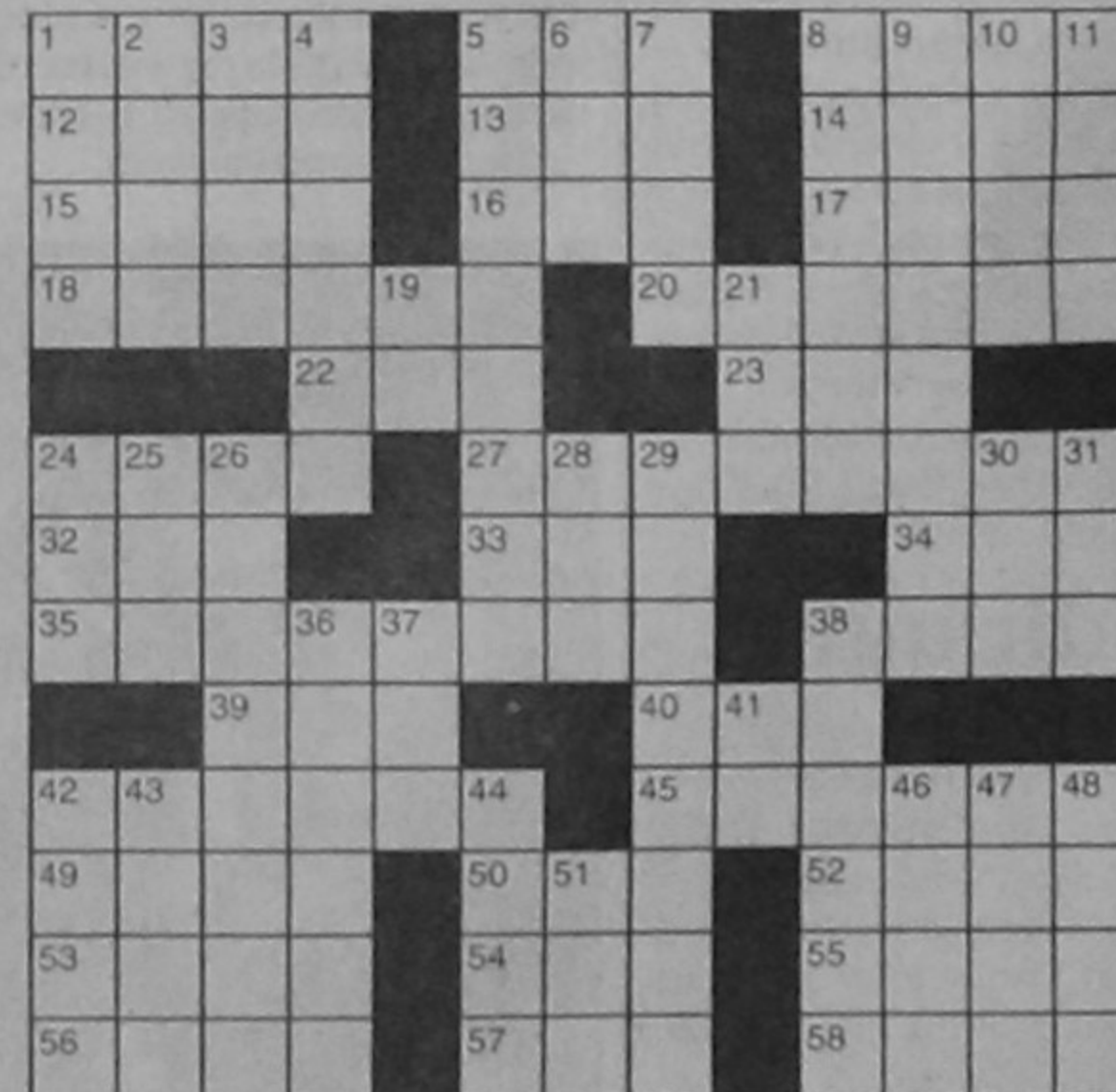
"Like others, I am also hurt with the defeat but it has nothing to do with my decision," said Qadir, who took 236 wickets in 67 Tests. He also had a tally of 132 wickets in 104 one-day internationals.



Andrew Symonds enjoys a drink while watching an NRL match at Gold Coast in Australia yesterday.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS		35 Puzzle		58 Other-wise		19 Yours truly	
1 Mid-May honorees	38 Formerly, formerly	1 Carte	24 Sphere	21 Work unit	25 Complete	26 In the ascendant	28 Enzyme suffix
5 Ref	39 Whatever amount	2 October stone	25 In the ascendant	29 Riot	30 Type squares	31 Same old same-old	36 Bring about
8 Unadulterated	40 Hostel	3 Atomizer output	28 Enzyme suffix	30 Type squares	31 Same old same-old	36 Bring about	37 Caustic solution
12 Grand story	42 "Family Feud"	4 Division	29 Riot	30 Type squares	31 Same old same-old	36 Bring about	37 Caustic solution
13 D.C. type	45 Torment	5 Transferred	29 Riot	30 Type squares	31 Same old same-old	36 Bring about	37 Caustic solution
14 Mimicked	49 Destroy	6 Cattle call?	31 Same old same-old	36 Bring about	37 Caustic solution	38 Allow to happen	41 007's doctor foe
15 Crosby, Stills and —	50 Sapporo sash	7 Advertise	36 Bring about	37 Caustic solution	38 Allow to happen	41 007's doctor foe	42 Totals
16 Ferrigno or Costello	53 Sean Penn title role	8 Potbelly	37 Caustic solution	38 Allow to happen	41 007's doctor foe	42 Totals	43 Condo, e.g.
17 Second-hand	54 Relatives	9 Buffalo resident, e.g.	38 Allow to happen	41 007's doctor foe	42 Totals	43 Condo, e.g.	44 Oxen's joiner
18 Occurring last	55 Reply to "Shall we?"	10 Fishing rod	41 007's doctor foe	42 Totals	43 Condo, e.g.	44 Oxen's joiner	46 Boat's bottom
20 With tender-ness	56 Eyelid woe	11 Whirlpool	42 Totals	43 Condo, e.g.	44 Oxen's joiner	46 Boat's bottom	47 Packs away
22 Vast expanse	57 See 24-Across		43 Condo, e.g.	44 Oxen's joiner	46 Boat's bottom	47 Packs away	48 Stratagem
23 Nipper's co.			44 Oxen's joiner	46 Boat's bottom	47 Packs away	48 Stratagem	51 Ginormous
24 Start of something big?			46 Boat's bottom	47 Packs away	48 Stratagem	51 Ginormous	
27 Lisa, to Marge			47 Packs away	48 Stratagem	51 Ginormous		
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33 Kreskin's claim			51 Ginormous				
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CRYPTOQUIP

FJKLO LM VULNU S BGJEQ
TOKORJQZ SRFJZY S TJPOM
MOV FJLZYEG LPLMB
NGOSFZ: "RJYLMZ OROKOM."

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF A FAMED ANCIENT GREEK POET IS BEHAVING VERY CHILDISHLY, I RECKON SHE'S BEING SAPPHO-MORIC.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: M equals N