



## Did U Know?

At the age of 26 Yelena Isinbayeva, Russian pole-vaulter, has been a nine-time major champion - Olympic, World outdoor and indoor champion and European outdoor and indoor champion.



**Juan Sebastian Veron**  
(Veteran Argentina midfielder)

"We've got great players but the coach [Diego Maradona] hasn't really unearthed his best team yet."



**ESPN**  
Sportscenter India  
Sports News  
Live at 9:30pm

## Broad out of final 2 ODIs

AFP, Nottingham

England all-rounder Stuart Broad will miss Thursday's sixth one-day international against Australia and Sunday's series climax at the Riverside with a knee injury, a team spokesman said.

Pace bowler and effective lower order batsman Broad was left out here at Trent Bridge, his Nottinghamshire home ground, on Thursday with what the spokesman said was an inflammation of a right knee tendon.

But the spokesman added that Broad was expected to be fit for the start next week of the ICC Champions Trophy one-day tournament in South Africa.

However, the fitness of Luke Wright for the Champions Trophy remains uncertain after the Sussex all-rounder was ruled out ahead of the fifth one-day international here on Tuesday after sustaining a toe injury batting against a bowling machine.

World champions Australia lead the seven-match series 5-0.

## Trescothick to skipper Somerset

AFP, London

Former England batsman Marcus Trescothick will take over as captain of Somerset following Justin Langer's decision to leave the English county.

Langer, 38, announced earlier this week that he would not be returning to the county next year, creating a vacancy for which Trescothick, 33, was the obvious candidate.

Since ending his England career because of problems with depression and stress that were exacerbated by touring, Trescothick has concentrated on batting for his county and has become the cornerstone of its recent good form.

"I've been a player for 17 years and I believe the time is right for me to take on the role," he said. "I am really looking forward to the challenge."

## Eid slumber hits sports

SPORTS REPORTER

The sports arena is all set to go into a prolonged holiday following Eid-ul-Fitr. But the national cricketers are set to make the earliest return since they made a delayed start to their preparations for the challenges ahead.

Ahead of the upcoming home series against Zimbabwe in October, the national cricketers started the preparation seven days back and finish their fitness drills tomorrow and they will resume their practice after Eid vacation on September 24.

After the vacation coach Jamie Siddons will join the team as he is expected to return to Dhaka on Tuesday after treatment on his skin cancer while Bangladesh vice-captain Shakib Al Hasan was expected to return home early this morning from Adelaide.

Shakib went to Australia for groin treatment and the good news was that he has no need of an operation rather physiotherapy is good enough for the world number one all-rounder in one-day rankings.

The cricket season will kick off with the Premier Division T20 starting from October 10 and after that Zimbabwe team will arrive in Dhaka to play a five-match one-day series

against the Tigers.

Football rolled into the pitch with the Federation Cup but the organisers were forced to make an early holiday following unplayable ground conditions that stopped the action on Tuesday and the booters will return to business after Eid and Puja break.

The holiday for the athletes who are in the training camp for the upcoming South Asian Games was scheduled to start from Friday but the athletes already started to leave the camp yesterday.

Bangladesh Olympic Association (BOA) announced a 11-day Eid vacation for the athletes but like the Bangladesh Swimming Federation many has shortened the leisure time even to half as advised by their foreign coaches.

There was however no scope for the Kabaddi players to share the joy with their family members during the Eid festival as they have two international events in Malaysia and Vietnam. The case is same for the weightlifting team as they are scheduled to leave Dhaka on September 27 to take part in a tournament in Uzbekistan.

It was learnt that Athletics Federation will remain closed the training for eleven days while shooters will enjoy maximum 12 days holidays.

## Fans will drive India

AFP, New Delhi

Mahendra Singh Dhoni's India will be keen to maintain their consistency to fulfil their fans' expectations at the Champions Trophy starting in South Africa next week.

India disappointed in the tournament's last edition at home in 2006 when they failed to qualify for the semifinals, but have given their fans plenty to cheer about with their recent successes.

They won five successive bilateral one-day series -- twice against Sri Lanka and once each against England, the West Indies and New Zealand -- and saw off Sri Lanka again in a Tri-nations series which finished on Monday.

"We have set our goals and one of them is to be the best team in the world," said India coach Gary Kirsten.

"We are headed that way and are very excited. We know we have to perform well as we continue the quest to be the best. We take pride in our consistency and we'd like to continue that."

India will be without explosive opener Virender Sehwag and key paceman Zaheer Khan, but Kirsten said the team still had the resources to give a good account of themselves in South Africa.

"Missing a player like Sehwag is huge because he is a

quality batsman. But we've got a lot of depth in our cricket at the moment. We've got a good batting line-up which is flexible," said Kirsten.

The Indian batting looks formidable despite Sehwag's absence as Yuvraj Singh, Sachin Tendulkar and Dhoni are all capable of playing match-winning roles with their exciting stroke-making.

The spotlight will be on middle-order batsman Rahul Dravid, who has just returned to the one-side after nearly two years. He is known for building an innings under pressure, having already scored more

than 10,000 one-day runs.

"It's good to have him (Dravid) back. He is a very experienced player and adds massive value to the team," said the Indian coach.

Gautam Gambhir keeps alive India's chances of making a brisk start as he has been in a fine touch. He is likely to open the innings with Tendulkar, the world's leading scorer in both Tests and one-dayers.

Tendulkar, playing international cricket for nearly two decades, will again be the key for his ability to play according to the situation and inspire

SEE PAGE 18 COL 6



PHOTO: AFP

India captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni speaks at a press conference in Mumbai yesterday. Dhoni and his men are scheduled to leave today to participate in the upcoming Champions Trophy tournament to be held from September 22 to October 5 in South Africa.

## SA's chance at hand

AFP, Johannesburg

Champions Trophy hosts South Africa boast the greatest bragging rights in one-day cricket as world number one but the trophy cabinet is virtually bare.

Rated among the leading 50-over teams for many years, the Proteas have not captured International Cricket Council (ICC) silverware since winning the inaugural Champions Trophy in Bangladesh 11 years ago.

All-rounder Jacques Kallis and bowler Makhaya Ntini remain from the team that defeated the West Indies by four wickets and a favourable draw should ensure they qualify for the semifinals of the 2009 tournament at worst.

The Proteas are in Group B with England, New Zealand and Sri Lanka and the other section comprises defending champions Australia, India, Pakistan and the West Indies.

South Africa captain Graeme Smith must believe the time has come for his experienced

squad to justify their lofty status and use home advantage to go all the way and win the October 5 final.

Nothing less than victory in the sixth edition of the biennial mini-World Cup will dispel the belief that when the going gets tough, South African cricketers choke.

"Every time we lose an important game the word 'chokers' is thrown around. During the last couple of years we have been on an upward curve and the team will improve and grow stronger," insists Smith.

But the batsman ranked eighth by the ICC accepts that while being rated the best national ODI team is extremely satisfying, it also brings additional pressure.

"Every sportsman knows that staying at the top is a lot harder than getting there. Instead of aiming for Australia, as they have for the past decade and a half, the rest of the world will be looking to take us down."

Fellow batsman AB de Villiers views the 15-

SEE PAGE 18 COL 5



PHOTO: AFP

International Cricket Council (ICC) general manager commercial Campbell Jamieson (L), ESPN-STAR Sports commentators Sanjay Manjrekar (R) and Wasim Akram (C) pose with a replica of the ICC Champions Trophy during a press conference in New Delhi yesterday.



PHOTO: AFP

Barcelona captain Carles Puyol (L) and Inter Milan striker Diego Milito fight for the ball during their Champions League match at San Siro on Wednesday.

## Niaz climbs to second

SPORTS REPORTER

Grand Master Niaz Murshed improved his position after winning the sixth round game in the Ravana Challenge International Chess Tournament in Colombo on Wednesday.

Niaz won the sixth round board against local TDR Pairs and raised his tally to 4.5 points to share the second spot along with four other players.

Four players are sharing lead with five points each after the end of the 6th round games.

## Win it for Bob, urges Younus

AFP, Karachi

Pakistan captain Younus Khan vowed Wednesday to win the Champions Trophy in honour of Bob Woolmer, the team's former coach who died during the 2007 World Cup.

"I'll go to Bob's home (in South Africa) and celebrate the Champions Trophy win with his family," said a confident Younus ahead of the Champions Trophy which gets underway on September 22.

Woolmer was coach at the last Champions Trophy tournament in 2006 when Pakistan were plagued by off-field problems.

Younus, standing in for the banned Inzamam-ul-Haq, resigned in protest at being made a "dummy captain".

Middle-order batsman Mohammad Yousuf was appointed, before Younus was given the job a day later after a change in the Pakistan Cricket Board set-up.

Then, a day before their opening match against Sri Lanka, Pakistan had to withdraw frontline fast bowlers Shoaib Akhtar and Mohammad Asif who had failed dope tests conducted before the team's departure for India.

"Those were testing times and Bob was very disappointed, when after winning the first match, we lost the next two, because he wanted to win the Champions Trophy," remembered Younus.

A year after the Champions Trophy, Pakistan unceremoniously exited the World Cup in the West Indies, where they embarrassingly lost to outsiders Ireland in the first round.

The next day, Woolmer was found dead in his hotel room in Jamaica, a death initially treated as murder by the Jamaican police, who quizzed the Pakistan players, before deciding the death was due to natural causes.

"Bob is the missing portion of our cricket and we feel his absence," added Younus, who is now the regular captain of the side which leaves for South Africa on Thursday.

Younus said he was in regular touch with Woolmer's widow and sons.

"I have been in regular touch with his wife and when we won the World Twenty20 in England in June we dedicated the trophy to Bob. This time

SEE PAGE 18 COL 8

## Inter hold Barca

### Gunners stage fightback

AFP, Paris



Liege 3-2 in their opening Champions League match.

The Brazilian-born Croatian also redeemed himself with his 81st minute winner as he had been responsible for the hosts' first goal.

Champions Barcelona, the side that beat Arsenal in the 2006 final, dominated Inter Milan but the duel between star strikers Samuel Eto'o - one of the scorers against Arsenal in that final - and Zlatan Ibrahimovic, now with Barcelona, failed to yield a goal.

Arsenal were without their two first choice 'keepers plus Robin van Persie but not even in their worst nightmares could they have imagined they would be 2-0 down in the first five minutes.

However, the hosts profited first from a crazy and over elaborate backheel by Eduardo - reprieved earlier this week from a two-match suspension for diving - on the edge of his area and Congolese striker Eliaquim Mangala made no mistake from 20 yards out.

It was veteran defender William Gallas' turn

next to make a mistake as he fouled Milan Jovanovic just inside the area and Jovanovic picked himself up to convert the penalty.

Arsenal gained some hope of pulling something out of the match when Danish striker Nicklas Bendtner scored right on the brink of half-time for his first goal of the season.

However, two goals in two minutes from Dutchman Thomas Vermaalen and Eduardo turned the game on its head.

Liverpool struggled to break through in the first-half against Hungarian outfit Debrecen but got the goal to lift them near the end of the first-half as Dutchman Dirk Kuyt scored what was to prove the only goal.

Arsenal's fellow British side Rangers also went behind during the first-half as Stuttgart's Russian international Pavel Pogrebnyak slotted home from inside the box to give the German strugglers a welcome boost.

However, the Scottish side restored parity in the second-half when Majid Bougherra equalised to grab a valuable away point.

Pogrebnyak's fellow Russians Rubin Kazan enjoyed a dreamlike start to their first ever campaign in European football's premier tournament as they took the lead through Alejandro Dominguez against perennial Ukrainian contenders Dynamo Kiev.

Kiev, though, were rampant in the second-half as goals by Ayilla Yussuf, Junior Gerson

SEE PAGE 18 COL 1

## Aussies rebuilding

AFP, Sydney



The Australian team is in a rebuilding phase while skipper Ricky Ponting is reassessing his future priorities as the one-time kingpins prepare for the defence of the Champions Trophy.

Shaken by the recent loss of the Ashes to England and the subsequent recriminations, the Australians are typically fighting back, stretching to a 5-0 lead over England in the ongoing ODI series.

Since the 2007 World Cup triumph in the Caribbean, the Aussies have dropped home

series against India and South Africa and lost two ODIs in a five-match series against Pakistan in Dubai/Abu Dhabi last May.

The Australians are developing a new one-day team for the 2011 World Cup and a new generation of stars are in the making, learning hard lessons along the way.

"The Champions Trophy is a key event on ICC's cricket calendar and is a good opportunity for us to see how this new-look Australian

one-day squad goes in its bid to retain the Trophy," chairman of selectors Andrew Hilditch said.

"The one-day team hasn't played in a major tournament since the 2007 World Cup and this will be a good chance to see where we are at."

"The team is in a rebuilding phase and we look forward to seeing how this squad goes in South Africa as we prepare for the 2011 World Cup in the subcontinent."

Ponting, who became the first Australian skipper in 100 years to lose two consecutive Ashes Test series in England, took some time off during the ongoing seven-match ODI series in England to escape the pressures.

He obviously has an eye on Australia's demanding playing schedule beyond the Champions' Trophy, including a one-day series against India in October as well as six home Tests against the West Indies and Pakistan.

Ponting has already announced his retirement from international Twenty20 cricket in a bid to prolong his Test career.

"The decision is all to do with my longevity

SEE PAGE 18 COL 1

## Younus wants strong WI

AFP, Karachi



Skipper Younus Khan said it was in the best interest of the game for the West Indies to enter a strong squad.

"West Indies have always been my favourite team and I would love to compete against them," he said.

A long-standing players' contract row forced the West Indies Cricket Board to enter a weakened squad for the elite-eight nation event which runs in South Africa from September 22-October 1.

As a result, leading players such as Chris Gayle, Ramnaresh Sarwan, Shivnarine Chanderepaul and Dwayne Bravo are not part of the squad which is led by little known Floyd Reifer.

Reports suggest the West Indies can still include some of the leading players if a settle-

ment is reached -- a scenario also acceptable to the International Cricket Council.

Younus said it was in the best interest of the game for the West Indies to enter a strong squad.

"West Indies have always been my favourite team and I would love to compete against them," he said.

Pakistan also play India (September 26) and Australia (September 30) in Group A while South Africa, Sri Lanka, England and New Zealand form Group B. The top two teams qualify for the semifinals.

Pakistan's 14-man squad left Karachi on Thursday for Johannesburg without disgraced paceman Mohammad Asif.

Asif, whose one-year doping ban expires on Tuesday, will fly out on September 21 via

SEE PAGE 18 COL 1



YOUNUS KHAN