

Armstrong retires for 2nd time

BBC ONLINE

Seven-time Tour de France winner Lance Armstrong has announced he is to retire from cycling for a second time.

The 38-year-old American quit the sport in 2005 before returning last year but he announced last month that 2010 would be the last time he rode the Tour. Armstrong finished 40 minutes behind winner Alberto Contador in 23rd place.

"This race has been good to me but I can't lie -- I'm ready to retire part two," said Armstrong, who crashed on a number of occasions during the race.

"I was just glad that three weeks of suffering is over and I get to go home. I don't have to stress about racing every day.

"I have a lot of happiness, a lot of good memories, just a lot of good times here."

The Texan saw his hopes of a record eighth win disappear on the eighth stage of his 13th Tour after he fell twice and lost nearly 12 minutes on the leaders.

On Tuesday, he was denied his first stage win since 2005 when Frenchman Pierrick Fedrigo edged him out in a thrilling sprint finish on stage 16.

In 1996 Armstrong had been given less than a 50-50 chance of survival after being diagnosed with testicular cancer as the disease spread to his lungs and brain.

However, after an aggressive bout of chemotherapy, he made a full recovery and returned to the sport in early 1998, going on to dominate the race from 1999 to 2005.

He set up the Livestrong cancer charity which gained international recognition as the organisation's distinctive yellow wristbands were worn by millions of people worldwide.

Last year he rode for the Astana team but after a public dispute with teammate Contador he left to form his own team, backed by American retailer RadioShack.

"Whatever he does, he is a story. He is an incredible character," said Frenchman Alain Galopin, one of RadioShack's sports directors.

However, when Armstrong returns home he will have to face more doping allegations that have dogged him throughout his career.

A US federal investigation is focusing on whether Armstrong, who has never tested positive, used government money to dope and win his seven Tours with the US Postal team.

The government probe follows allegations made by Armstrong's former teammate and disgraced 2006 Tour winner Floyd Landis.

"I can assure you that there is not going to be a teary-eyed confession from me," said Armstrong, who has hired a criminal defence attorney to fight the allegations.

"I'm 100 per cent confident. I know what I did and didn't do. And I know that the press is incredibly sensational. I'm not a fool, that's what they need, that's OK. In the end it will all come out.

Eyes on

FROM PAGE 17
Olympic quota place with a score of 596 to 597 out of 600, but the reality is that his average score in practice is between 592-593.

Asif said he would try to regain his best score of 596 he had made during the SA Games at home.

Veteran shooter Sabrina believes it is almost impossible for them to win a medal in Munich and the experience they will gain from the championships will make their task easy in the upcoming Commonwealth Games in India.

Coach Shoebuzzaman was also not much optimistic about the shooters.

"Our shooters are far away from the ones who are taking part in the championships and we should not expect any extraordinary results from them. But I hope they will keep their momentum of the practice," said the former shooter.

Not only through the 2010 ISSF World Championships, quota places for Olympics will also be distributed through the 2011 edition of the championships, ISSF World Cups 2011, and Continental Championships in 2010, 2011 and 2012 and the shooting federation plans to send shooters in all tournaments in a bid to earn quota places for Olympics.

Of the eight shooters, the National Shooting Federation of Bangladesh is bearing expenses for two -- Ratna and Sadia -- as per its executive committee meeting decision while Chittagong Rifles Club and Group4 are sponsoring Asif and Sharmin respectively. Sabrina, Baki and Chandan will tour at their own cost.



PHOTO: AFP

Mardy Fish rejoices defeating John Isner in the final of the Atlanta Tennis Championships at Atlanta Athletic Club on Sunday.

Fish triumphs in Atlanta

Tennis

AFP, Atlanta

Mardy Fish won his second straight title as he outlasted fellow American John Isner in brutal heat, claiming the trophy 4-6, 6-4, 7-6 (7/4) at the ATP Atlanta Championships on Sunday.

The 49th-ranked Fish followed up title success at his prior event, the grass tournament this month at Newport the week after Wimbledon.

The match win was the ninth in a row for the inspired American, who came through in just under three hours in blistering 37 Celsius conditions.

"It feels great. This is what I've been putting in the work for. I feel as good as I've ever felt in my career," said Fish, winner of his last 10 matches and a winner of two tournaments in a year for the first time in his career.

"Playing in the heat, you have to convince yourself you feel better than the other guy, even if you're feeling it. I struggled at the end of the match. I wasn't used to the weather as I had played at night.

"I felt great until about 5-11 in the third set, but I didn't want to leave anything out there. I was maybe a little lucky to pull through. It was an extremely physical match with all of the heat. He's no fun to play. He gives a lot of people trouble.

"My confidence is really high right now."

Second seed Isner, winner of the longest match ever played in the sport when he won in the first round at Wimbledon, may still not have totally overcome the mental physical drain from that 11-hour contest a month ago.

Isner remains on one title this season, obtained at the start of the season in Auckland.

"Conditions were brutal again," said Isner. "The first hour was the hottest. It took a lot out of both of us. I've never played in conditions this hot and humid.

"We were both just scrapping it out. This is the third final this year that I could have won. It's disappointing -- four finals this year and I've lost my last three.

"I know that sooner or later it will happen -- I'll make sure of that. It stinks to lose this tournament."

The second seed was unable to put the match away after winning the first set with the break of serve which counted at the end after missing on his first five.

But Fish, playing in the faster daytime conditions which speed up the court and ball, managed to find his rhythm in the second as the heat began to war down big man Isner.

Floridian Fish profited as Isner struck a double-fault to set up a set point, which Fish grabbed to square the sets at one each.

The sixth seed went up a 3-1 break in the third set only to lose it a game later. As the last set wound into a tiebreaker Fish's form again began to lift.

The winner over top seed Andy Roddick in the semi-finals earned a 4-1 margin, held off Isner and earned three match points as Isner hit a tired return long.

Fish advanced to victory on his second chance on a concluding unforced error from his weary opponent.

Fish lost around 15 kilograms last autumn as he recovered from knee surgery and the results has been a vast improvement in his game and fitness.

He now stands 16-2 on the ATP since the start of June after earning a finals spot on grass at Queen's club but losing to American Sam Querrey.

Philosophical Ricky

Cricket

CRICINFO

Ricky Ponting might have played his last Test in England, but he still hasn't ruled out one final attempt to win the Ashes on enemy soil. Ponting flew out of London last September freshly hurt by the loss of the urn and keen to return in 2013, but a year later he has become more philosophical about his chances of being part of the next Ashes battle in England.

The country has been troublesome for Ponting. It has reduced him to mortal status as a batsman -- he averages 41.79 in 20 Tests in England -- and Australia have won only three of their 12 Tests in the British Isles under Ponting's captaincy. Pakistan's victory at Headingley levelled the series 1-1, so he has still not won a Test series in England as leader.

By the time Australia return for an Ashes tour Ponting will be 38, and he knows that his

chances of still being in the Test side depend not only on his desire but also on whether he retains his reflexes and ability. On that front, the signs for Ponting are slightly worrying. In the past 12 months he has averaged 39.81 in Tests and the powerful pulls and hooks that have been his trademark have at times brought his downfall.

His 209 in Hobart in January was made possible only because Mohammad Aamer dropped a sitter at fine leg when Ponting had not yet scored. At Headingley this week he made 66, but he could easily have been sent on his way first ball when he padded up to an Aamer delivery that would have clipped the top of off stump.

"I honestly don't know [if I'll play in England again]," Ponting said after the Leeds loss. "It's all going to be down to how well I play. I love playing for Australia. I cherish every moment that I have to captain the side and represent my country. If I get back here in a couple of years time then

so be it, but if I'm not good enough then there's nothing I can do about that."

If there was a hint of self-doubt in that statement, it would be a rarity for Ponting. He is not keen to concede vulnerability by giving up the pull shot, or by shifting himself down the order. Even when Australia were trying to claw their way back into the game at Headingley, Ponting tried to be attacking against an excellent group of swing bowlers.

"I don't think I played any more defensively than normal," he said. "Over the years I've always had that fairly aggressive intent to go out there and put it back on the bowlers. I still felt I had that in the second innings but they bowled pretty well."

Combating the moving ball will be even more difficult at 38. For now, Ponting will focus on the Ashes at home and a World Cup defence on the subcontinent early next year. Whether Australia's captain will push on beyond that is anyone's guess.

Butt open to advices

Cricket

AFP, Leeds

Pakistan's novice captain Salman Butt is happy for his players to keep offering him advice during their forthcoming series against England if it helps to build a united team.

Butt, in his first match as captain, led Pakistan to a three-wicket second Test win against Australia at Headingley here on Saturday -- a victory that ended a record run of 13 straight Test defeats at the hands of the Aussies stretching back 15 years.

While Pakistan were in the field, several players could be seen wanting a word with their new skipper and, while some captains might see that as a challenge to their authority, 25-year-old opening batsman Butt was delighted.

"Being humans we are never happy, when you have advice you never want it and when you do want it you say 'nobody comes and gives it to me'," Butt said.

"I'm very lucky. The best thing they (the players) are doing is they are reading the game, they are in the game.

"It's not that I take all the advice, but it's important for me that every player is in the game and thinking about the game.

"If I'm open to every man, even a

youngster playing his first game, then that will mean he will believe in me. So to build a team, I think this is a very important thing to do."

Pakistan just did enough to reach their victory target of 180 against Australia here at Headingley on Saturday, although they lost seven wickets before they were able to square a two-match series at 1-1.

Only a week earlier, Australia had thrashed Pakistan by 150 runs at Lord's, a defeat that prompted Pakistan captain Shahid Afridi to quit Test cricket.

But teenager Mohammad Aamer, well supported by fellow seamers Mohammad Asif and Umar Gul, took advantage of overcast conditions at Headingley for a match haul of seven wickets.

And Pakistan's successful run chase featured a maiden fifty from Azhar Ali in what was only the batsman's second Test.

Pakistan's seamers, together with leg-spinner Danish Kaneria, certainly appear capable of posing England's batsmen problems when the first of a four-Test series starts at Trent Bridge on Thursday.

But there are doubts about a batting line-up where Ali, Umar Amin and Umar Akmal have played just 12 Tests between delivering big totals, although Pakistan do have Yasir Hameed, a veteran of 23 Tests, in reserve.

"I can't predict what is going to happen

(against England)," Butt said.

"We know tough times will come. We know it will not be an easy ride so we have to stick together and try our best. That's all we can do."

There has been speculation that, with Afridi out with a side strain, Pakistan might call up either of ex-captains Mohammad Yousuf or Younus Khan, both originally left out after bans imposed following a series whitewash in Australia this year, to bolster the top order.

However, Butt indicated he was happy with what he had and said even his pace attack faced competition from the uncapped duo of Wahab Riaz and Tanvir Ahmed.

"The discussion (on a replacement) is yet to take place. We'll see, maybe we will discuss it but at the moment I think everything is fine," said Butt.

"We have two or three guys sitting out of the side who we can rely on.

"We have a left-arm seamer who bowls at 90 miles per hour at the first change in Wahab Riaz.

"We also have Tanvir Ahmed who got 90 wickets in the domestic season.

"He's a very good seam bowler -- Shane Warne said when he was watching him the other day that he looks like a very good bowler."

Sr. Division football

SPORTS REPORTER

Victoria Sporting Club beat Uttar Baridhara Club 2-0 in the super league of the Bashundhara Metropolitan Senior Division Football at the Bir Shreshtha Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur yesterday.

Shogah and Shamim scored the two goals for the winners on either side of the half.

In the day's relegation league match, Dhaka Wanderers Club drew 1-1 with Agrani Bank at the same venue.

Shahadat scored first for Wanderers in the 20th which was cancelled by Sujon in the 55th minute.

Watson shocks Mirza

PTI, Wrexham

India's Sania Mirza was defeated 6-2, 6-4 by Britain's US Open junior champion Heather Watson in the final of the 25,000-dollar ITF tournament here on Sunday.

The 18-year-old Watson said: "Against Sania I just told myself I had nothing to lose because she's been ranked 27 in the world before and she is a really good player. I just did a lot of running and got as many balls in court as I could."

Anna ends title drought

AP, Portoroz

Anna Chakvetadze beat Johanna Larsson 6-1, 6-2 in the Slovenia Open final on Sunday to win her eighth WTA Tour title.

Chakvetadze broke twice in each set against Larsson, who was playing in her first final and who missed all three break-point chances in the second set.

Chakvetadze's previous title came in Paris in 2008. A top-five player in 2007, she has fallen to No. 103 in the rankings.

Glenn gets Sara

Cricket

IANS, Sydney

Australian bowling great Glenn McGrath has got engaged to his American-Italian girlfriend, Sara Leonardi, two years after the death of his wife Jane.

"We are engaged and we are really happy," said McGrath.

In 2008, Jane passed away at the age of 42 due to breast cancer and after that McGrath never thought he would fall in love again. But romance sparked off in his life once again when he was introduced to Sara at a party in Cape Town last year.

"When Jane died, it felt as a part of me died. But now I feel to live again. All because of Sara. I went into this relationship not to see how things would go. I wanted this. This is the rest of my life now," McGrath told the Sydney Morning Herald.

McGrath, 40, has always been open about his relationship with the 28-year-old Sara.

And the next step for the couple is marriage.

"I think marriage is definitely in our future. I see Sara as my partner for the rest of my life. I never thought I would fall in love with anyone else but I am in love with Sara, totally and completely and absolutely. I fought against that for a time, fought as hard as I could, but in the end it was useless," said McGrath.

Sara has already revealed that she is in love with the two kids of Jane and Glenn. McGrath also hopes for Sara to be pregnant soon with his child.



SARA LEONARDI AND GLENN McGRATH

Sachin rises

FROM PAGE 17

respectively.

Meanwhile, seasoned off-spinner Harbhajan Singh and pacer Zaheer Khan were static in the top-20 bowlers' chart, led by South African fast bowler Dale Steyn. Zaheer, who missed the first Test after suffering a shoulder injury, was seventh with 722 points, followed by an off-colour Harbhajan, 47 points adrift.

Sri Lankan spin wizard Muttiah Muralidaran, who retired from Test cricket after becoming the first to bag 800 wickets last Thursday, was the third best bowler in the rating chart. In the team ranking, India retained their numero uno status with 124 points, followed by South Africa (120) and Australia (116).

However, India will lose its number one ranking if Mahendra Singh Dhoni's men lose the three-match Test series against Sri Lanka with a 2-0 or 3-0 margin. There was no Indian in the top-five all-rounders' list, led by star South African Jacques Kallis.

'India will

FROM PAGE 17

be a good challenge."

Katich said Australia's two Test rookies, allrounder Steve Smith and wicketkeeper Tim Paine, performed brilliantly against Pakistan and felt each had a bright future in the five-day game.

But he also acknowledged Australia's specialist pacemen, Mitchell Johnson, Ben Hilfenhaus and Doug Bollinger, weren't at their best against Pakistan, despite having conducive bowling conditions.

"I guess the guys probably would have been a little bit disappointed, but they were all trying and you can't fault their efforts," Katich said.

"They all put in and tried their hardest, it just didn't happen, so hopefully they will learn from that and be better for it."

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

- | | | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| ACROSS | DOWN | DOWN | DOWN |
| 1 Holly-wood clashers | 34 Surround members | 1 Early birds? | 11 Like many dorms nowadays |
| 5 Basilica area | 37 -- Aviv | 2 Toe woe | 20 Pie-in-the-face comic |
| 9 English channel? | 38 Boom times | 3 Shrek is one | 22 American emblem |
| 12 Energetic | 39 Big fish story? | 4 The gamut | 24 Jubilant yell |
| 13 "Buttons and --" | 42 LummoX | 5 Team | 25 Venue for Capades |
| 14 Author Buscaglia | 44 In the thick of | 6 Space-craft compartments | 26 Sister |
| 15 Spiritual guide | 48 Work with composer | 7 Gym wear, maybe | 27 18-wheeler |
| 16 Rhyming tributes | 49 "Carmina Burana" | 8 Curvaceous character? | 29 Links prop |
| 17 Foolhardiness | 50 Earring site | 9 Mediocre | 30 Keats subject |
| 18 Dance lesson | 51 Tall tale | 10 First Greek consonant | 31 -- de deux |
| 19 -- Today | 52 Take on | | 35 Ruddy |
| 20 Roe provider | 53 Squared | | 36 Incompetent golfer |
| 21 Coffee break time | 54 Talk on and on | | 39 Calendar page |
| 23 Late lunch hour | 55 Blood-hound's clue | | 40 Largest of the seven |
| 25 Raid | 56 Alluring | | 41 Cry |
| 28 "Put a sock in it!" | | | 43 Frizzy 'do |
| 32 Prompter's job | | | 45 Relocate |
| 33 Phantom's bailiwick | | | 46 Mountain goat |
| | | | 47 Say it isn't so |
| | | | 49 Discoverer's cry |

Solution time: 27 mins.

WIT SCAM SCAB
OAR ELLA HOPE
KNITWEAR RUSE
CHEF VIPER
LAYER SPIN
TNGA KNOCKOUT
COL ATALE FRO
KNEEJERK AFAR
VALE DILLY
RELAX MEMO
ARTD KNAPSACK
MIRE EURO DUE
SEES ABET SEN

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12										
15										
18										
25	26	27								
32										
34										
39	40	41								
48										
51										
54										

CRYPTOQUIP

OJ EFH GKEBCOJA GENSJRJX'M

AHRV VRA, O CRU CESWU BE

GCEEMW KEJA SRJBM, VFB

OB GRNW FS MCEHBM.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WHEN YOU WIN IN A

SIGN LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY CONTEST, I

GUESS YOU'VE DEFEATED EVERYONE HANDILY.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: B equals T