SPÖRT

Dokic ready to end self-exile

AFP, Melbourne

Jelena Dokic is to break her selfimposed exile from Australia to play in next year's Australian Open, it was announced here on Monday.

Dokic, formerly the country's topranked player, left Australia following her exit from the 2001 Australian Oper when her father accused tournament officials of fixing the draw.

A 17-year-old rising star, she was heavily influenced by her erratic father Damir, who she has since dumped as coach

Despite blaming the media and Tennis Australia for her problems, she should be welcomed back, Open promoter Paul McNamee said.

"She left as a girl and returns as a woman," McNamee said here on Monday

"I think she will get a fair go. ! would hope and expect that.

"There is a lot of history there but she is a 20-year-old now and has taken control of her career."

McNamee said he was encouraged after speaking with Dokic at this year's

"I spoke to her in New York and was optimistic and I said at the (tournament) launch I was hopeful she would play but I only saw her name on the entry list a few days ago," he said.

After reaching consecutive quarter-finals in Tokyo and Paris early in the year. Dokic crashed out in the three grand slams she played.

There followed a difficult period of early round losses before a return to

Dokic, ranked No.15 in the world. beat Kim Clijsters in the semi-finals before losing the final to Belgian World No.1 Justine Henin-Hardenne.

WC final

FROM PAGE 13

at Bangalore, where Gilchrist and Hayden put on a century-plus stand to put their team on course for a big total.

well in the final," conceded Ganguly. "There is a possibility we will play with three seamers because they have

"We expect our fast bowlers to do

done well in league matches. "I don't think the toss is very crucial. The important thing is to play

really well and beat Australia. It's anybody's game now. I think it will be a keen contest between the two top teams of the world."

India will also have to lift their batting performance against a disciplined Australian attack.

Opener Virender Sehwag's return to form augurs well for the hosts, whose batting left a lot to be desired in two of their three matches against the

Sehwag slammed a quick-fire 130 in the last league match against New Zealand at Hyderabad on Saturday to

set up his team's crucial win. India can match the devastating Australian opening pair if Sehwag

continues to provide valuable support to star batsman Sachin Tendulkar. The rival openers' performance

holds the key to the final on a pitch expected to favour batsmen.

Australian skipper Ricky Ponting said he did not believe past results will

have any bearing on the final. "We've played the last two games outstandingly well, but the last game

does not count," he said. "We'll have to be at our best to beat

Captain Saurav Ganguly, deputy Rahul Dravid, Sachin Tendulkar and India in the final. We're confident of Venkatsai Laxman form an experienced winning because we have been playmiddle-order, while spin will be in the ing good cricket. hands of the seasoned Harbhaian Singh "Toss is always a factor, but not

many things are decided by the toss. We'll have to play well

"I know there will be 120,000 people supporting them. I know the crowd will be vociferous and hostile and there won't be much support for us, but we know how to keep them



PUT CRICKET ASIDE! India cricketers (L-R) Saurav Ganguly, Sachin Tendulkar and Virender Sehwag play volleyball as part of their practice yesterday ahead of the TVS Cup final against Australia at the Eden Gardens in Calcutta.

Rain forecast at Dambulla

Cricket

AFP, Dambulla

Bad weather has threatened to ruin the start of the three-match one-day series between England and Sri Lanka here on

Preparations for the maiden daynight international in this central town have been hit by week-long rains and the north-east monsoons show no signs

Heavy overnight rain left the square at the Rangiri international stadium damp and further showers have been forecast for Tuesday The match, originally scheduled to

to a day-night game after Sri Lankan cricket authorities last week tested, and cleared, the newly-installed floodlights.The remaining two one-dayers will also be played under lights at the

be played during the day, was changed

Friday and Sunday. If play goes ahead uninterrupted on Tuesday, both teams will rely on seamers to exploit the damp, greenish wicket

India have selected an experienced cricket

squad with few surprises for the four-Test

series here, Australian captain Steve

Waugh said the Indian line-up,

"I see they've got five seamers, so

"But it's a pretty experienced squad

obviously they feel as if they need a few

with not too many surprises and they're a

quality side so they're going to be hard to

Left-arm pacemen Zaheer Khan and

Ashish Nehra lead India's new-ball attack

in the absence of the retired Javagal

Srinath, with Ajit Agarkar, Salvi and

Waugh said he was unsure how many

Pathan providing the support role.

quick bowlers in Australia, "he said.

announced on Sunday, appeared to be a

Cricket

Waugh said on Monday.

quality side

Premadasa stadium in Colombo on

at the spruced-up venue.

"There is bound to be some moisture on the wicket because there has not been any sunshine to dry the pitch," Sri Lankan captain Marvan Atapattu said.

"The wicket here usually generates a lot of movement and it will be even more The last time a one-day series was

played on this ground in May, Sri Lanka

were denied a place in the final by New Zealand and Pakistan. Atapattu said the prevailing conditions were tailor-made for England, who hold a psychological edge over the hosts

daymeetings "It would have been ideal to have a dry wicket which favours spin, but there is little we can do about the weather," the Sri Lankan captain said.

after winning five of their last seven one-

England's captain Michael Vaughan, fresh from a successful tour of Bangladesh where the tourists swept both the Test and one-day series, expected a much tougher series in Sri

"This is the real test for us," Vaughan said. "Sri Lanka have more experience than us at the top level and are obviously

India don't surprise him

be available for the start of the Test series.

STEVE WAUGH

Friday, will play two warm-up matches

before the first Test at the Gabba in

Brisbane from December 4.

The Indians, who leave for Australia on

The second Test will be played in

in Adelaide from Tuesday.

"But we are ready to fight it out." Vaughan pinned his hopes on all rounder Andrew Flintoff, who scored three unbeaten half-centuries and

grabbed seven wickets in the one-day

series in Bangladesh. "Andrew is a class act and appears in very good touch," he said. "He is a player capable of turning a match around as he showed in Bangladesh.'

ENGLAND (from): Michael Vaughan (captain), Marcus Trescothick, Vikram Solanki, Paul Collingwood, Andrew Flintoff, Rikki Clarke, Chris Read, Gareth Batty, Ashley Giles, James Anderson, Richard Johnson, James Kirtley, Ian Blackwell, Andrew Straus, Anthony

SRI LANKA (from): Marvan Atapattu (captain), Sanath Jayasuriya, Romesh Kaluwitharana, Kumar Sangakkara Mahela Jayawardene, Tillakaratne Dilshan, Russel Arnold, Chamara Silva Upul Chandana, Kumar Dharmasena, Chaminda Vaas, Nuwan Zovsa, Nuwan Kulasekera, Dinusha Fernando Muttiah Muralitharan.

Umpires: Daryl Harper (Australia) and Tyronne Wijewardene (Sri Lanka)

Kasparov levels with machine

Chess Grand Master Garry Kasparov won game number three on Sunday against a virtual reality supercomputer "X3D Fritz," tying the score in their four-game challenge at 1.5-to-

A fourth and final game in the manversus-machine series will take place at the New York Athletic Club on

Kasparov tied his first game against "X3D Fritz" but lost the second.

The Russian chess champion played wearing 3-D glasses, gazing at a chess board that appears to float in the air. He dictated piece movements with voice commands, and rotated the board with a joystick

Kasparov is considered the world's best chess player, even though he lost the world champion title to Vladimir Kramnik in 2000. This is his third series against a computer. He lost to Deep Blue in 1997 and tied with Deep Junior

"X3D Fritz" is an upgraded version of "Fritz," the machine which took on Kramnik in Bahrain in 2002, tying him

Waugh thinks the world of Gillespie

AFP, Adelaide

Australian Test captain Steve Waugh said here Monday he believed compatriot Jason Gillespie was currently the best bowler in world cricket.

Gillespie will return to first-class cricket for South Australia against Waugh's New South Wales (NSW) in a Sheffield Shield match at Adelaide Oval from Tuesday after passing a

He bowled 12 overs for 1-25 in his comeback in a weekend club match, his first serious outing since a straining a side muscle in last month's first Test against Zimbabwe in Perth. Waugh said that from Australia's

point of view, he was pleased to see Gillespie back but, as Blues skipper, he hoped NSW did not see too much of him over the next four days.

"Good on him, he's a quality bowler, probably the best bowler in the world at the moment, so we certainly respect him," Waugh told reporters

"I'm sure he'll do pretty well."

The injury against Zimbabwe was the latest in a string of setbacks for Gillespie, who has missed 32 Tests since making his debut for Australia in

match came to life when second-half substitute Khokon struck twice in the space of a minute.

80th minute, went past the shaky Mohammedan keeper. Sensing that another goal was on the way if he could just shoot on target. Khokon used his other foot to defeat Milon a minute later in the same fashion

back for Abahani as Mohammedan held their nerve for the remainder. Yellow cards: Shuvro (Mohammedan)

Sandro (Abahani)

Jewel, Faisal, Amin Rana (Sauray Raju), Khokon Das, Kaiser, Pappu Manju, Bakhtiar (Anwar) and Farhad. ABAHANI KC: Nizam (Munna) Kingshuk, Sila Fode, Hassan, Masud Rana, Pranotosh, Joy (Agu), Sandro, Parvez, Ujjal and Rakib (Khokon).

Kiwi tour

tomorrow (Tuesday) afternoon. There will be no further comment from New Zealand Cricket until the process is completed.' The series, arranged to compensate

Pakistan for New Zealand's abandoned tour in May last year following a bomb blast outside the team's Karachi hotel, ran into trouble after the team received an e-mail threat from Cricket officials were reviewing

security measures in Pakistan with the assistance of the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade and through its own security consul-The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB)

which has threatened to cancel a

scheduled tour of New Zealand next month if the Black Caps do not honour their commitments, was hopeful the Kiwis will play the series. "Both sides have been in constant

touch for the last 72 hours and we are hopeful the tour will be salvaged, Hasan said.

Snedden has been speaking to us and we are also updating the International Cricket Council over the progress." Bangladesh and South Africa undertook trouble-free tours of

Pakistan earlier this season and India have agreed to visit the arch-rivals in March-April next year for their first Test series in Pakistan in almost 15

Federer finishes Agassi



Wimbledon champion Roger Federer completed a dream season with a perfect run through the ATP Masters Cup, overwhelming Andre Agassi 6-3, 6-0. 6-4 here Sunday in a raininterrupted final

The 22-year-old Swiss blasted 11 aces past Agassi, the last on match point, to win in just 88 minutes, waiting through a 2 1/2-hour rain delay to take 1.52 million dollars and the year-end number two ranking at the season

"It was one of the best matches for me this season," Federer said.

"I'm very happy how the whole year went, especially this tournament, I worked hard this year. You always have ups and downs but I feel this season has

Federer captured his first Grand Slam crown, won ATP bests of 78 matches and seven titles and reached

there from early in the match to the

"He did what he needed to do but he probably even could have played

The 33-year-old American came here with questions after a two-month layoff following his loss in the US Open semi-finals and departed more confident that he can be a threat in 2004, starting with an Australian Open title

"I felt like every time I had questions to answer, I did, "Agassi said. "It has been a hard week. It has been

a lot of tennis after two months of not playing. I anticipate and plan on being better in Australia than I was here." Peter Lundgren, Federer's Swedish

coach, wants to trim his pupil's sched-

ule a bit next year but looks with confidence to Federer's chances in January's "He can still be stronger, work on his serve, be more consistent in every match. He can improve," Lundgren

Federer beat US Open winner Andy

Roddick in the semifinals but the American won the year-end top ranking. Had Federer not suffered his only career loss to Roddick in an August semifinal at Montreal, he would have

think he should walk away and feel he is the best," Federer said.

matches against Agassi but saved two match points here on Monday to collect a 6-7, 6-3, 7-6 round-robin triumph and dominated the championship match.

"In practice I was feeling terrible. I really didn't get the rhythm. Then the matches started and there I am playing

Federer won the first set under overcast skies with a few drops falling, then broke and held and went ahead 0-30 when showers stopped play after 38 minutes, midway into would what be a run of seven games in a row for Federer



Roger Federer of Switzerland holds the Masters Cup trophy after defeating Andre Agassi in the final on November 16.

world number one, then romped through a field of the world's top eight players.

"What a year -- seven titles, my first Grand Slam, number one in the world,"

Federer said "It has really been an unbelievable

Agassi managed only 13 winners, one-third Federer's final total, and never earned a break-point chance Agassi, fatigued from a semifinal victory over Germany's Rainer Schuettler, made 30 unforced errors to

22 by Federer. "I was just beat up. The edge was off "But if you look at his game, it's

not to be relaxed now. The Australian Open looks pretty good. I don't see why he can't do good in Australia if he

Federer has felt much more relaxed since winning at Wimbledon in July. "Wimbledon has taken a lot of

has relaxed me big time. It's not easy to

When West Indies scored 481 runs

in their first innings the match was

effectively put out of Zimbabwe's

reach, even though they managed to

go through all these things."

pressure off my back," Federer said. "I felt I should do better in Grand Slams. I felt I should win one. Winning it

do," Agassi said.

"I needed to play my best, be sharp, be moving well -- he just took that away

Zimbabwe let it go

AFP, Bulawayo

Zimbabwe captain Heath Streak said his team had thrown away the chance of victory after the West Indies won the second and final Test by 128 runs here

ended in a draw.

Saturday to leave them 90-9 overnight and only 35 minutes play was needed on the final morning to wrap up the

chance and we missed it. But we are a young side and will learn a lot from West Indies skipper Brian Lara, who

picked up the man of the match award performance

world cricket," said Lara. "But I thought the 11 guys who

played 10 days of Test cricket against us Zimbabwe went into Sunday

with just one wicket remaining, Streak and last man Blessing

Zimbabwe's Mark Vermeulen and Craig Wishart scored 118 and 96 respectively. But it was all not quite

Even though West Indies surprisingly slumped to 128 all out in their second innings, it left Zimbabwe with far much to do.

And poor batting, on a surface

which held up well, accounted for their Mahwire was bowled by Mervyn dismal response.

> Wickets fell in rapid succession and Zimbabwe did what they do too often collapse in the face of even a modest

Streak tried to achieve a decent personal score, which he did with 33 not out, and also protect Mahwire as much as possible. But it worked for only a short period of the morning.

Lara, who with 8,625 runs to his name is now the highest scoring West Indies batsman, surpassing Viv Richards, was basking in a rare away

"We're all very pleased to have won our first Test match away from home

"We don't do it very often. It was also my first victory away from home as captain. We didn't bat well in our

second innings but it was enough." Zimbabwe coach Geoff Marsh

refused to blame the state of the pitch for his side's batting collapse. "I can only speak for Zimbabwe but

it was simply rank bad batting," he said West Indies celebrate their victory with a visit to a wildlife park while Zimbabwe head for the nets for some serious coaching and training in

and was particularly frustrated with goalkeeper Nizam Majumder who had a horrendous time under the bar.

goalkeeping and the attack. We don't have a reliable custodian and our forwards are also very weak. Those were the decisive factors in today's match. Besides, conceding four goals in the first half was a bit too much for any fight back," said Munna after the

He also gave full credit to Mohammedan. "They thoroughly

conceding two soft goals.

could have been easily saved by our goalkeeper," said Rakib. The pain of defeat got to Abahani's

Brazilian recruit Alesandro Pedroso too. After being taunted by an Abahani fan, a furious Pedroso rushed to confront him and was heard saying, "I will kill you."

Teammates and club officials restrained the temperamental

Brazilian before he could reach the supporter. The mood was naturally different

on the other side of the ground.

Mohammedan captain Jewel Rana however wasn't prepared to get carried away with the prestige victory. "I am not very happy with the way

we played today in the second half because we conceded two goals in two minutes. If we continue with this type of slackness, we will not win the final. If I say that we played brilliant football in the first half, I have to concede we were rubbish in the second," said the former Bangladesh captain

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer **ACROSS** 34 Gentle 8 Reacts in 1 Nightclub whale 36 Census movie 9 Wag Manilow statistic 54 Wasn't 10 Egyptian 37 Raised colorfast 5 Nest 38 Third 55 Play-11 Contain-

12 Common 13 "Stop gallopina! 14 Sapporo sash 15 Extremely funny 17 Relatives 18 Trafalgar

19 Fourth estate 21 TV show set in Stuckey-22 Diets 24 Rudimentary learning 27 Throttle 28 Impale 31 Court

builder's rock wright 16 Staff David "brick" from the 56 Century 20 --- judi-9 Triangular Sun 40 College 41 Chocolate DOWN 1 Song-43 Dash writer Sammy another's 2 Theater hopes, on award eBay 47 New 3 Become Haven tiresome **26** Wag 4 Demeans 27 Navy 48 Sense of 5 Dead 29 Exist 51 Literary 6 Abbott's collecfirst

> letters Solution time: 25 mins.

22 React to silliness 23 Fairy-tale meanie 24 Piercing implement 25 Feathery mascot

30 Malicious 35 Satchel 37 Diamond employee 39 Allude (to) 40 Purchase Factor' 42 Radius' neighbor 43 Erstwhile 44 Dullsville 45 Peruvian

FZUDAFG CDJYJDZO WUDB BUMAOOYDGH WMYFR? "PFZFUD PM IIMMY! Yesterday's Cryptoquip: I SAW THE CHEF MAKE A HUGE CROCK OF PASTA SAUCE. IT WAS

A STIRRING PERFORMANCE.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: P equals S The Cryptoquip is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that X equals O. It will equal O throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

of Australia's frontline pace attack would Adelaide from December 12-16 followed by the third at Melbourne (December However, he said it was good to see 26-30) and the fourth at Sydney (January Jason Gillespie on the comeback from

The team for the subsequent one-

injury after being named in the South Australian squad to play New South Wales day series also featuring Zimbabwe will be named later. have not won a Test series outside the sub-continent since 1986, face a har-

> rowing time in Australia. They have failed to win a series in seven previous tours of Australia, with the last of their three victories in 28 Tests down under coming way back in 1981 on

a rare spinning wicket in Melbourne. On the last two tours of Australia in 1991-1992 and 1999-2000, India lost seven of their eight Test matches, five of them inside four days.

A different Bashar

FROM PAGE 13

mate Rajin Saleh did one better. **SCOREBOARD**

Scoreboard of the Emirates 27th National Cricket Championship second semifinal between Chittagong and CHITTAGONG Masoom c Hannan b Sumon

Al-Shahriar c James b Sumon Azam c Bashar b Sumoi 21 Kapali lbw b Sujor 15 Akram b James K Mashud b Hannan 26 Arif b James Baisya c Rana b Wasel Dalim c Rajin b Enamul Si 11 Arafat lbw b Hannan Extras: (b-1, lb-3, nb-3, w-8) 15 Total: (All out in 45.1 overs) 124 Fall of wickets: 1-13, 2-46, 3-52, 4-57, 5 82, 6-100, 7-105, 8-124, 9-124. 33 Sujon 26 10 2 24

Wasel 10 21 Enamul Si Hannan 2.1 COMILLA Hannan lbw b Arafat Enamul Sr c Baisya b Masoom Raiin c & b Arafat Sumon c Azam b Arafat Bashar not out

28

46

11

13

Fall of wickets: 1-29, 2-37, 3-43, 4-86, 5-Bowler 9.2 4 15 Baisya 0 32 Sumon 2 Arafat 13 24 Masoom 13 Kapali Result: Comilla won by five wickets

All happening

His first goal, a left-footer in the

But that was the end of the come-

TEAMS MOHAMMEDAN SC: Milon, Shuvro

Referee: Tayeb Hasan.

FROM PAGE 13 "The process may be completed

"NZC chief executive Martin

Cricket

vear for me."

on Sunday to take the series 1-0. The first Test in Harare last week Zimbabwe's batting collapsed on

Zimbabwe are one of the minnows of

were very determined.' requiring an impossible 143 runs to win

"The second and fourth goals

my game. It felt like I had no chance out end," Agassi said.

taken the top spot.

"Andy deserves his number one. I

"I feel I'm the best this week." Federer had lost his first three career

"It has been a little surprising tually," Federer said.



quite good. He has improved a lot going to make things worse," Agassi physically and matured as a person. "He is a great player. We just want After waiting 2 1/2 hours, Federer

> after a double fault in the ninth game of the third set and served out to end the

"I was afraid stopping was only

needed just 12 minutes to end the

second set. Agassi netted a backhand

"He did what any great player would

Mahwire survived seven overs before

match. Streak said: "We certainly had a

after his 191 runs, praised Zimbabwe's "A lot of people will say that

have such kind words for his players

match.

Abahani captain Rakib Hossain also held Nizam responsible for

HEATH STREAK get 377 in reply, a deficit of 104. for some time

preparation for the upcoming fivematch one-day series.

Abahani's day to forget outplayed us," said the star of yester-The Abahani manager however, didn't

"Our main problem areas are

CRYPTOQUIP tion baseman "BUFR WOJJ, XMC DP WXO 52 Grand-7 Debtor's

46 Cherished 49 "- Lazy

