

Look down on Aus: Wright

CRICINFO, undated

John Wright has given England some Ashes series advice by telling them not to let the Australians know if they are overawed. Wright was in charge of India's drawn series with Australia in 2003-04 and he has used his new book John Wright's Indian Summers to outline his successful plan, which was initially devised from his time as a New Zealand opening batsman in the 1980s.

"You don't look up to them, you look down on them -- if you give any hint of being overawed you are gone," Wright told the India team as he stood on a chair to deliver his series address. "The players looked up at me with bemused expressions probably wondering if I planned to jump or fly." The tactic worked as Sourav Ganguly guided India to a 1-1 result in Steve Waugh's final series, although Australia gained revenge with a 2-1 win on their tour in 2004.

Wright told The Courier-Mail the New Zealand teams of the 1980s just stood and watched the "guys in green and gold track suits." "As soon as you start doing that you are losing the battle," he said. Despite the attitude to their opponents, New Zealand won four of 16 Tests between the teams in the decade and beat Australia in consecutive home-and-away series in 1985-86.

Wright, who scored two hundreds and averaged 38.69 in 19 Tests against Australia, told the paper touring teams also had to accept they would be targeted by the media. "It's so predictable it really should be on the itinerary," he said. "Some well-known ex-players start to talk then one of the current team chips in with his view. Depending on your view it's either psychological warfare, cheap points-scoring or the same old bullshit. We were never intimidated in that series [in 2003-04], which is the key to playing in Australia."

England showed in the first session of the 2005 Ashes series that they would not be overawed, with their fast bowlers striking Hayden, Langer and Ponting. Despite losing the opening Test, the side recovered to seal a 2-1 victory that set up a thrilling rematch that starts at the Gabba in November.

Clement in quarters

AFP, Washington

France's Arnaud Clement eliminated fifth seed Dominik Hrbaty from the 600,000-dollar ATP Washington Classic, taking his first victory in four career meetings with the Slovakian.

Clement's 6-3, 6-2 triumph lifted the 57th-ranked Frenchman into a Friday quarterfinal against the winner of a later match between Australian third seed Lleyton Hewitt and Germany's 120th-ranked Denis Gremelmayr.

Clement broke Hrbaty in the penultimate game of the first set to seize his first career set off the world number 21, then seized a 3-2 lead in the second set on a break when Hrbaty netted a forehand.

The 28-year-old from Aix-en-Provence held, then rallied down 40-0 with the final five points of the seventh game to break again and held once more to finish a long-sought first triumph over the Slovakian.

Hrbaty won their first meeting in 1997 at Marbella and later won at St. Petersburg in 1999 and Monte Carlo in 2000. All four meetings have come in the round of 16.

Noakhali

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Jaipurhat, Bangladesh Navy and automatic qualifiers Sylhet and Narayanganj -- hosts and the defending champions respectively -- in the 12-team finals scheduled to begin in Sylhet from August 18.

The 70-team qualifying round began across the country on July 21 with the zonal champions from Education and Services zone, Shariatpur, Magura, Perojpur, Habiganj, Tangail, Jaipurhat, Gaibandha and Bandarban moving to the finals.

Ferguson

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is likely to be joined at Old Trafford early next week by the Villarreal midfielder Marcos Senna. United are close to agreeing a four million pound deal for the Brazil-born Spain international.

Ferguson said: "We are looking at other players and I think something will happen next week. There is an interest in Senna, there is an interest in others as well."

"We are trying to find different combinations in midfield. Carrick gives us one and the player who will possibly come in next week will give us another option."

"Over the time I have been at the club, we have had to build four or five teams. It's not always easy, but this team we are trying to build will hopefully stay together for a few years."



Marat Safin of Russia (L) is congratulated by American James Blake after his 7-6 7-6 win in the Legg Mason Classic at the William H.G. Fitzgerald Tennis Center in Washington on Thursday.

Safin dispatches Blake

Tennis

INTERNET, undated

James Blake's bid for a second title in three weeks came to an abrupt end.

Blake, who won in Indianapolis two weeks ago, was dispatched by Russian Marat Safin, 7-6 (8-6), 7-6 (7-5), in the third round of the \$600,000 Legg Mason Tennis Classic on Thursday night.

The top seed here and fifth-ranked player in the world, Blake was broken in three of nine opportunities by Safin, who fired 10 ace en route to his first win over a top-five player since March, when he beat countryman Nikolay Davydenko in the third round at

Indian Wells.

A two-time Grand Slam champion, Safin is barely 18 months removed from winning the 2005 Australian Open. But he has struggled with injuries since and has seen his ranking tumble to 92nd in the world. He is only 16-13 on the season.

Safin, a former world No. 1, will face Wesley Moodie of South Africa in the quarterfinals on Friday. Moodie, who upset No. 6 Sebastian Grosjean in the second round, battled past Kenneth Carlsen of Denmark on Thursday, 6-3, 6-7 (5-7), 7-6 (8-6).

Also in the top half of the draw, 11th-seeded Frenchman Arnaud Clement routed No. 5 Dominik Hrbaty of Slovakia, 6-3, 6-2. He awaits No. 3 Lleyton Hewitt of

Australia, who cruised past German Denis Gremelmayr, 6-1, 6-4, in just 61 minutes.

The only seeded American remaining, No. 16 Mardy Fish routed Andrea Stoppini, 6-3, 6-1. The Italian qualifier, who won his first two ATP Tour matches this week, was coming off a shocking upset of No. 4 Andre Agassi.

Fish awaits eighth seed Andy Murray of Great Britain, who ousted No. 12 Feliciano Lopez of Spain, 7-5, 6-2.

The 14th seed, Tim Henman made easy work of American lucky loser Jan-Michael Gambill, 6-1, 6-3. The British veteran will next face seventh seed Dmitry Turunsov of Russia, who outlasted Korean Hyung-Taik Lee, 6-7 (10-12), 7-5, 6-3.

Sana Sangha win opener

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

Sana Smriti Sangha edged Provat Sangha by a solitary goal in the opening match of the Namira 2nd Division Football League here yesterday.

The 18-team league was declared open by Ainul Haque Babul, vice-president of Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Manikganj, at the Shaheed Miraj-Tapan Stadium. Deputy Commissioner SM Shamsur Zakaria, Police Superintendent Shahidul Haque Bhuiyan, District Sports Association general secretary SMM Iqbal Hossain, league convener Abdus Salam Badal were also present.

Dalmiya

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before it following his alleged failure to reply to a showcause notice

The board had then asked Dalmiya to appear before the Disciplinary Committee at Chennai on August 15.

In the suit of July 26, Dalmiya prayed for an order to the BCCI management not to give effect to his suspension on April 19 from attending BCCI meetings as CAB president and the notice dated July 17, vide which he was asked to appear before the disciplinary committee.

The Disciplinary Committee is headed by Board President Sharad Pawar and includes Shashank Manohar and Chirayu Amin.

Jakarta to host

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point for the life of our national soccer," he told AFP.

He said the more than 100,000-seat Bung Karno or Senayan stadium in Jakarta was being prepared for the final.

The AFC had announced in 2003 that the 2007 competition would be held in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) region after adopting a rotation policy for hosting the Cup, similar to world football's governing body FIFA.

It will be the first time that ASEAN has held the competition since 1984, when Singapore played host.

Sixteen teams will compete for the Cup with qualification rounds already under way. The teams are divided into six groups of four with the top two from each progressing to the finals.

The next round of qualifying takes place on August 16 but without Lebanon, which pulled out of the competition this week blaming Israel's "barbaric attack" on the country.

Japan, who have won the Asian Cup three times, are the defending champions having beaten China 3-1 in a bad-tempered final in Beijing in 2004. But their work is cut out this year following Australia's defection from Oceania to the AFC, which has allowed them to compete in the Asian Cup for the first time.

Following their second-round heroics at the World Cup in Germany, the Socceroos go into this month's qualifying round as Asia's highest-ranked team in the world at 33. Japan have slumped to 49 and South Korea to 56.

Kim sets up Martina clash

Tennis

REUTERS, San Diego

Top-seed Kim Clijsters tested the limits of her endurance with a 6-4 3-6 6-3 win over Jelena Jankovic to move into the quarterfinals of the Acra Classic in San Diego on Thursday.

Clijsters was joined by second seed Maria Sharapova, who beat fellow Russian Vera Zvonareva 6-4 6-4. Sharapova will face Mary Pierce in the quarters after the defending champion blitzed Finland's Emma Laine 6-2 6-1.

Belgian Clijsters will face eighth seed Martina Hingis in the last eight after the Swiss beat Flavia Pennetta 6-2 3-6 6-1.

Clijsters looked sluggish against the hard-hitting Jankovic, but held her nerve in the third set to see off her opponent.

"My legs felt dead today, but I just tried to hang in there," said Clijsters, who was playing her sixth match in eight days.

"I felt like it was so hard to push

myself, but I tried. I was trying to find a way to get back to where I wanted my legs to be."

After letting three break points slip, Clijsters finally broke Jankovic to take a 4-3 lead in the third set.

"In the third set, it's a little of a mind game," said Clijsters, who has won 42 of her last 44 matches in North American hard court events.

"That's always going to have a little bit of an influence on both the person who wins and loses the game."

Hingis, who lost to Clijsters in the Australian and French Open quarterfinals this year, predicted the quarterfinal would be a battle.

"You have to commit to a long match and grind it out," Hingis said.

"You have to go in knowing in your head you have to rally with her. You cannot overpower her. You have to be able to run down a lot of shots and take every opportunity you can get."

Sharapova, playing in her first tournament since falling to Amelie Mauresmo in the semifinals of Wimbledon, relied on a big serve

and solid defense to see off Zvonareva.

After a close first set, Sharapova raced out to 4-0 lead in the second, only for the speedy Zvonareva to claw her way back to 4-5. But Sharapova's serve held firm and she closed the match out.

"Every time I play her, I expect a good test because I know how good and strong she can be," said Sharapova.

"It was about reacting to the situation and seeing what she brought today and what I needed to challenge her."

In other matches, fourth seed Elena Dementieva of Russia came back from a break down in the third set to beat India's Sania Mirza 6-2 3-6 6-3. She will face fifth seed Patty Schnyder, who beat Argentine Paola Suarez 6-3 3-6 6-1.

Czech seventh seed Nicole Pietrangeli defeated Daniela Hantuchova 6-4 6-2 and will play 19-year-old Russian Anna Chakvetadze, who upset 14th seed Ana Ivanovic 4-6 6-4 6-1.

Manaudou upstages Germans

Swimming

AFP, Budapest

French swimming star Laure Manaudou took centre stage at the European swimming championships here Thursday with two more golds as Germany's women set a new world record in the 4x200m freestyle relay.

Manaudou, the 400m Olympic champion and world record holder, struck gold in the 100m backstroke and 200m medley to add to her 800m freestyle crown she won on Wednesday, taking her tally to three golds.

Her backstroke victory came after she produced a devastating late finish, moving from sixth at the

turn to surge to gold.

Manaudou also managed to break the French record in the 4x200m relay at the end of the afternoon with 7min 56.44sec.

The 19-year-old from Villeurbanne -- who became the first French woman ever to win Olympic gold when she triumphed in Athens two years ago -- is still in the hunt for three more golds in Budapest.

If she is successful in the 200m and 400m freestyles and the 4x100m freestyle relay she will become the most successful woman swimmer ever at a single European Championships.

Looking forward to Sunday's 400m freestyle, Manaudou said she was aiming to break her world record of 4min 3.03sec.

During her 800m win, she passed the 400m mark at about 4min 5sec on her way to a European record of 8:19.29.

Though Manaudou is not usually given to bold predictions, she is setting out with an eye on the clock in the 800m. "I really want to break my world record," she said.

Germany broke the women's 4x200m freestyle relay world record in 7min 50.82sec, bettering the previous best set by the United States of 7:53.42 set at the Athens Olympics.

Among the men, winners on Thursday included Germany's Heige Meeuw in the 50m backstroke, Poland's Pawel Korzeniowski in the 200m butterfly and compatriot Slawomir Kuzcko in the 200m breaststroke.

Phelps floats to US title

Swimming

AFP, Irvine, California

Michael Phelps edged world record-holder Ian Crocker by 22-hundredths of a second Thursday lift the 100m butterfly title at the US Swimming Championships.

Athens Olympic hero Phelps captured his fourth national title in three days as he triumphed in one of the meeting's marquee match-ups.

His time of 51.51sec was a championships record, while Crocker settled for silver in 51.73.

"The time was a little slow for me," said Crocker, who set the world record of 50.40sec in winning the world title in Montreal last year. "I haven't been feeling a lot of speed yet, but this is just the beginning of the championship season."

"I expect to swim faster than that (at Pan Pacs). A world record would always be nice, but sometimes people expect miracles out of us every time we swim. We expect that, too, but you've got to be realistic."

Crocker and Phelps have led the world in this event since Crocker set his first world record in 2003.

Phelps has won five of their eight head-to-head meetings in the event, and all three that Crocker has won have taken a world record to do it.

When we race, we bring out the best in one another," Phelps said. "It's fun to get in the water and race the best, and Ian has proved that he is the best in the 100 fly and it's exciting for me to get out and race him."

The women's 100m breaststroke featured the top three US swimmers of all time in that event -- American record-holder Jessica Hardy, former American record holder and 2000 Olympic gold medalist Megan Quann Jendrick and Tara Kirk.

After turning in the top time in this morning's prelims, Jendrick returned to the pool Thursday night to pick up the win with a time of 1:07.54. Hardy and Kirk tied for second in 1:07.65.

"Coming into this meet, everyone was asking me what my goal time was or how fast I thought I could go, but my goal wasn't really a time, it was just to take first or second and make the Pan Pacific team," Jendrick said. "The time was my third-best this season, but like I said, the whole goal was first or second. It feels so good. It's exciting to be back on top."

Hardy jumped out to the lead. She and Kirk were one-two after the turn until Jendrick passed both in the final 30m.

"I saw Taras and Jessicas splashes right next to me, so the whole time, I was just like, Keep going," Jendrick said.

Cullen Jones captured the men's 50m freestyle title with a time of 21.94, the fastest in the world this year.

Ben Wildman-Tobriner was second in 22.16 and Jason Lezak third in 22.22.

Veteran Gary Hall and Neil Walker tied for fourth in 22.49.

"A lot of big names in that heat," Jones said. "Gary Hall is definitely one of the guys I've looked up to since '96, and Lezak, after 2000, I was completely impressed. It was amazing competition."

Katie Hoff broke her own US Open record in the 400m medley with a time of 4:35.82, more than four seconds ahead of the field.

Ariana Kukors was second in 4:40.10 and Kaitlin Sandeno was third in 4:43.06.

The women's 50m free went to Olympian Kara Lynn Joyce in 24.97sec. Five-time Olympic medalist Natalie Coughlin was second in 25.17 and Courtney Cashion third in 25.20.

The master hails Monty

Cricket

PTI, London

World cricket's highest wicket-taker Shane Warne says England spinner Monty Panesar has a real chance of being very successful on the international stage.

The Australian spin great believes Panesar, the first Sikh to play for Britain, has what it takes to scale dizzying heights.

"To me, he is the new Monty Python: something completely different," Warne wrote in his column in 'The Times' on Friday.

"Three things strike me straight away. First, he has that bit of spunk about him. Secondly, he loves bowling. He will need that when he has to bowl long spells on flat pitches. And thirdly, he is very astute at reading a situation," Warne wrote.

"He has good control and when conditions suit, that allows him to bowl faster and still spin the ball."

Warne said bowling in Australia would be a test of character for Panesar.

"Our batsmen are naturally positive and they will try to take him on."

"As for the crowds, they could go either way. There are always one or two opposition players they take to. On the other hand they always pick out another one or two for mickey-taking, and Monty's batting and fielding make him a candidate."

Murali brings SL back

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caught behind off Malinga even as television replays showed the bat hit the ground instead of the ball.

Mark Boucher smashed 32 off 41 balls, including three fours in one Malinga over, when he was bowled around his legs by Muralidaran attempting a sweep shot.

The joy of winning the toss had seemed short-lived for Prince as the ball swung and bounced on the fresh wicket to leave South Africa three wickets down by the eighth over.

As the wicket eased up under the hot sun, Hashim Amla began the rescue act with 40 before Prince and de Villiers settled in to hammer the bowlers.

Chaminda Vaas, returning for Sri Lanka after missing the first Test due to a hamstring injury, struck with the second delivery of the match by

trapping out-of-form opener Herschelle Gibbs leg-before.

Gibbs, who made 19 and 18 in the first Test, failed to bring his bat down in time and was beaten by a ball that went straight through and rapped his left pad.

The South Africans wore black bands on their arms to mourn the death of Solomon Makosana, the president of the Western Province Cricket Association, in Cape Town early Friday.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at stumps on the opening day of the second Test between Sri Lanka and South Africa at the Sara Oval on Friday:
SOUTH AFRICA: First innings
Gibbs lbw b Vaas 0
Hall c Dilshan b Malinga 0
Rudolph b Malinga 13
Amla lbw b Muralidaran 40

Prince c P Jayawardene b Muralidaran 86
de Villiers c P. Jayawardene b Malinga 95
Boucher b Muralidaran 32
Pollock not out 57
Boje c Sangakkara b Maharooof 11
Steyn c Jayasuriya b Muralidaran 6
Ntini c Maharooof b Muralidaran 13
Extras: (w-1, nb-7) 8
Total: (All out in 89.5 overs) 361
Fall of wickets: 1-0, 2-4, 3-31, 4-70, 5-231, 6-256, 7-273, 8-307, 9-327

Bowler O M R W
Vaas 18 4 71 1
Malinga 18 4 81 3
Muralidaran 33.5 2 128 5
Maharooof 15 2 52 1
Jayasuriya 5 0 29 0

Pietersen plunders unlucky

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the first over after the drinks break when, having switched ends, he took a juggling caught and bowled chance to get rid of Trescothick, early on a drive.

And four balls later fellow left-hander Strauss exited when he edged Nazir to Younis Khan at second slip.

Nazir was unlucky not to have Pietersen, on two, caught behind with England 77 for two. Hair rejected the appeal but replays indicated Pietersen had inside-edged the ball on to leg.

Strauss had earlier decided to bat despite the overcast conditions which usually assist swing bowling at Headingley.

None of Pakistan's bowlers had the pace to escape with bowling short and a boundary was often the result when they did.

In the ninth over Nazir, in for the dropped Abdul Razzaq, came on for

his first bowl in Test cricket since appearing against Sri Lanka at Lahore in 1999.

England made one change with Chris Read replacing wicket-keeper Geraint Jones, dropped because of a lack of runs.

Pakistan made three changes with Salman Butt, omitted at Old Trafford, restored as an opener in place of the injured Imran Farhat while all-rounders Razzaq and Shahid Afridi were dropped.

Specialist opener Umar came in for his first game of the series.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at tea on the first day of the third Test between England and Pakistan at Headingley on Friday:
ENGLAND: First innings
Trescothick c and b Sami 38
Strauss c Younis b Nazir 26
Cook c and b Gul 23
Pietersen not out 82
Collingwood c Umar b Gul 31

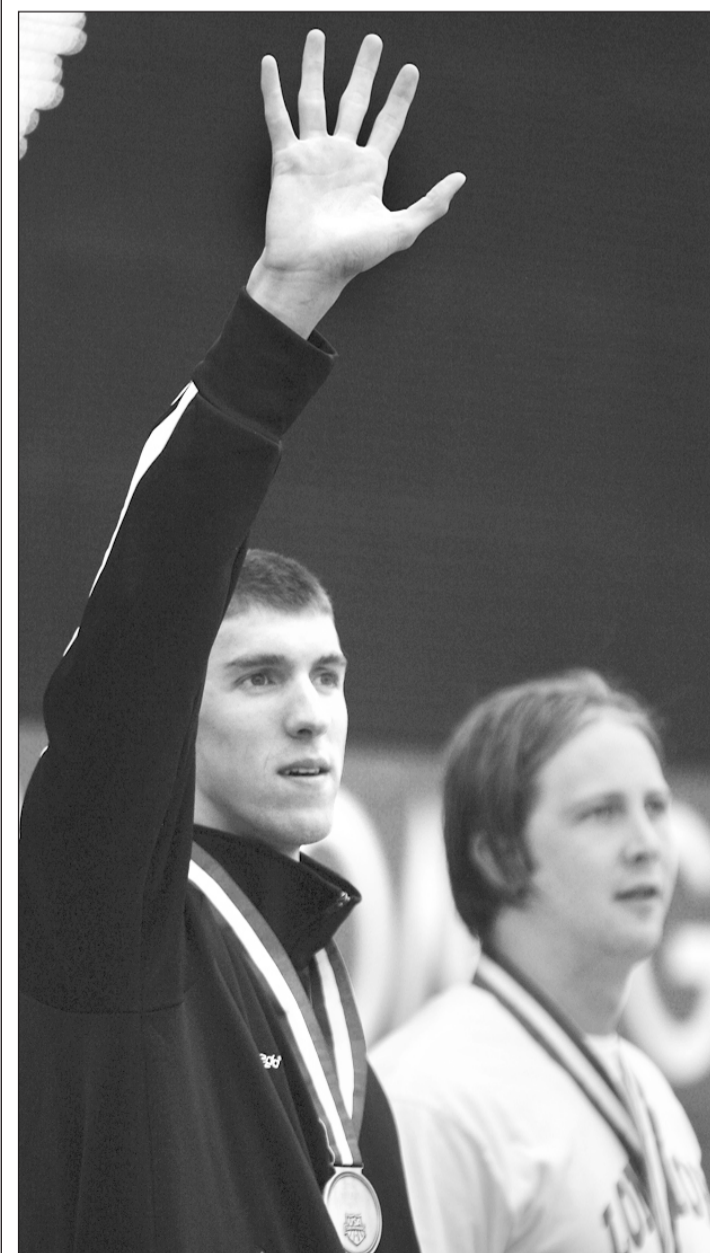
Bell not out 9
Extras: (b-4, lb-3, nb-8) 15
Total: (For 4 wkts in 54 overs) 224
Fall of wickets: 1-67, 2-67, 3-110, 4-192

To bat: Read, Mahmood, Hoggard, Harmison, Panesar

Bowler O M R W
Sami 14 1 74 1
Gul 14 2 68 2
Nazir 14 5 37 1
Kanerria 12 1 38 0

PAKISTAN: Taufeeq Umar, Salman Butt, Younis Khan, Inzamamul Haq, Mohammad Yousof, Faisal Iqbal, Kamran Akmal, Mohammad Sami, Shahid Nazir, Umar Gul, Danish Kaneria

Toss: England
Umpires: Darrell Hair (AUS), Billy Doctrove (WIS)
TV umpire: Nigel Long (ENG)
Match referee: Ranjan Madugalle (SRI)



Michael Phelps (L) waves at the crowd during the medal distribution ceremony of the men's 100m butterfly final of the US National Championships at the William Woollett Jr. Aquatic Center in Irvine, California on Thursday.