

Jones's father slams Warne

Shane Warne has been blamed for losing the Ashes in reaction to his criticism of England's Australian-raised wicketkeeper Geraint Jones, reports said Thursday.

The father of the wicketkeeper has fired a salvo at Warne, claiming he cost Australia the Ashes by dropping Kevin Pietersen on the last day of the 2005 series at The Oval.

Warne split a slips catch when Pietersen was just 15 and en route to 158 which gave England an Ashes-clinching draw.

Warne claimed this week that Jones's bumbling behind the stumps could help deliver the Ashes back to Australia but Queensland-based Emrys Jones hit back.

"While Shane Warne was bagging the England wicketkeeper, I suppose the awestruck press didn't think of asking him about failing to catch Kevin Pietersen in the fifth Test," said Jones senior in a letter to Brisbane's Courier-Mail newspaper.

"This drop cost Australia the Ashes."

Jones also rang the newspaper to complain that his son had been treated badly by the media in his former homeland, the newspaper said.

Geraint Jones fumbled several catches behind the stumps during the last Ashes and was axed earlier this year.

He regained the Test gloves ahead of Chris Read because of what coach Duncan Fletcher said was his superior batting.

Warne claimed this week the selection could backfire spectacularly.

"He dropped some crucial ones in the last Ashes. You don't want to be dropping Ricky Ponting when he's on half a dozen in the first Test when you've just been called back in the side," Warne said.

"He will be under enormous pressure. It's a known fact that Geraint Jones is in the side for his batting, not his keeping."

Collina

FROM PAGE 24 About 100 people were killed and 15,000 displaced along with the destruction of homes and livelihoods of the 300,000 Sunni Muslims in the idyllic nation of 1,192 tiny coral islands scattered across the equator.

Collina will be visiting the Maldives in January to referee a special charity football match organised by the newspaper.

Maldives' national football team will play against a combined team of the Haveru Daily. The newspaper has invited captains of regional national sides to play in its team.

Crespo sends

FROM PAGE 24 Carlos Paredes' name was added to the referee's notebook for throwing the ball away petulantly when a free-kick was awarded to the home side.

Pontus Farnrud dragged a shot wide and Tonel went close with a header as Sporting started to probe with more adventure.

Just as Sporting started to stir, Inter broke the deadlock in the 36th minute.

Crespo timed his run to perfection to break the offside trap after Stankovic had dinked a sublime pass over the top, and the predatory Argentinian buried a right-footed shot past Ricardo.

Sporting were forced to open up after conceding and that played into Inter's hands.

First Stankovic shot straight at Ricardo from outside the box and then Crespo blazed over from close range.

Nani and Stankovic were booked before Crespo's outstretched boot narrowly failed to connect with Grosso's low cross in the 75th minute.

Esteban Cambiasso came on for Inter late on and received a rapturous welcome having been out since early September with a calf injury.

Ibrahimovic almost made it 2-0 at the death, but his fierce shot was superbly saved by Ricardo.

Inter's joy at advancing was soured slightly by the sight of their French midfielder Olivier Dacourt being carried off on a stretcher at the final whistle.

Valencia roll

FROM PAGE 24 One-handed save to turn a diving header from Silva round post moments later.

They got the breakthrough, however, in the final minute of the half when midfielder Angulo cut inside leroklis Stoldidis after a neat move on the left and sent a shot curling past Nikopolidis and into the far corner.

Morientes, who had come on in place of Villa, doubled Valencia's lead, rising high above the defence to power home a fine cross from Silva at the far post.

Joquin almost added a third when he dinked a clever chip over the keeper after jinking his way into the area, but his shot was cleared off the line and he then hit the bar with a stunning free kick taken from the right-hand touch line.

Valencia centre-back Roberto Ayala ended the game by earning himself a booking that ensures he serves a suspension in his side's final match against Roma.



South Africa batsman Jacques Kallis is about to play a big shot over the covers as India wicketkeeper Mahendra Dhoni (L) looks on during the second ODI between the sides in Durban on Wednesday.

Kallis blows India away

FROM PAGE 21 Dravid. "The boys did a good job in restricting South Africa but we knew we needed to keep wickets in hand."

"We have to play much better than this," said Dravid. "We know we can play better and it's a matter of proving it."

South Africa's total was always likely to be too much for India on a fast, bouncy pitch but the match was evenly balanced while India's leading two batsmen, Sachin Tendulkar and captain Rahul Dravid, were together.

The match turned irrevocably in South Africa's favour when Dravid was bowled by Charl Langeveldt for 18 and Tendulkar was bowled by Nel three balls later for 35.

From being 62 for two in the 16th over, India were 62 for four.

The remaining batsmen proved hopelessly incapable against fast, hostile bowling, with Nel producing a career-best performance, sparked by his dismissal of Tendulkar.

India's master batsman was trapped on the crease by a fast ball which cut back sharply and knocked out his off stump from an inside edge.

Neither Mahendra Dhoni nor Suresh Raina looked comfortable but they put on 20 before the last six wickets tumbled for nine runs. It was an ignominious end for India after their bowlers and fielders, marshaled by captain Rahul Dravid, kept the South African batsmen in check for much of the innings despite Kallis' fine knock.

The home side were wobbling at 209 for seven with 26 balls left but Kallis and tailender Nel put on 39 for the eighth wicket before Nel was run out for 22 off the last ball of the innings.

It was Kallis' 14th one-day international century but his first in 25 matches against India - the only major cricket nation missing from his list of

hundreds. He had been dismissed three times in the 90s against India.

Indian pace bowlers Munaf Patel, Zaheer Khan and Ajit Agarkar each took two wickets.

Kallis, batting at number three, faced the ninth ball of the innings after captain Graeme Smith was leg before to Khan for one. He batted solidly from the start of his innings and made his runs off 160 balls with 15 fours.

South Africa were in some trouble at 63 for three but AB de Villiers (41) helped Kallis put on 87 for the fourth wicket.

They had to overcome some accurate slow bowling from Harbhajan Singh and Tendulkar, who conceded only a combined 29 runs in eight overs before De Villiers went on the attack against off-spinner Harbhajan.

He swept him for four, then swung him over midwicket for six, prompting Harbhajan to fire in a ball down the legside that went for five wides. The over cost 17 runs.

De Villiers went for one ambitious shot too many when he lost his balance and was stumped attempting a reverse sweep against part-time left-arm spinner Dinesh Mongia.

Mark Boucher helped Kallis put on 46 off 46 balls.

The innings then lost momentum as Boucher, Justin Kemp and Shaun Pollock were out in quick succession before Nel, with a previous highest score of 12, played a surprisingly effective hand.

India got off to a bad start. Wassim Jaffer, making his one-day international debut in the absence of the injured Virender Sehwag, lasted only three balls before being bowled for nought by Shaun Pollock.

Tendulkar played some glorious strokes but Pollock had Mohammad Kaif caught at backward point for eight.

Then came the match-clinching double blow as Dravid and Tendulkar were out in quick succession. Dravid was bowled off an inside edge by Langeveldt before Tendulkar went in almost identical fashion.

Dravid said after the match he was hopeful that Sehwag's injured finger will heal in time for Sunday's game in Cape Town.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of the second day-night one-day international between India and South Africa at Kingsmead in Durban on Wednesday:

SOUTH AFRICA: 248 for 8 (Kallis 119, De Villiers 41, Boucher 23, Bosman 22, Nel 22; Patel 2-39, Agarkar 2-47, Zaheer 2-53)

INDIA: Jaffer b Pollock 0, Tendulkar b Nel 35, Kaif c Gibbs b Pollock 8, Dravid b Langeveldt 18, Dhoni c Boucher b Nel 14, Raina c Kallis b Nel 4, Mongia c Kemp b Kallis 1, Harbhajan lbw b Kallis 1, Zaheer c Boucher b Nel 6, Patel not out 0, Extras: (nb-2, w-1) 3

Total: (All out in 29.1 overs) 91

Fall of wickets: 1-0, 2-39, 3-62, 4-62, 5-82, 6-83, 7-83, 8-84, 9-89

Bowler O M R W

Pollock 7 2 17 2

Ntini 6 0 32 0

Langeveldt 4 0 26 1

Nel 8 2 13 4

Kallis 4.1 1 3 3

Result: South Africa won by 157 runs.

Man-of-the-match: Jacques Kallis.

Third ODI: Nov 26, Cape Town.

'Hot spot' adds to cricket's techs

AFP, Brisbane

An infra-red camera reportedly designed to track fighter jets has become the latest hi-tech gadget used to cover the Ashes series between Australia and England.

Host broadcaster Channel Nine said the device, known as the "hot spot", could show whether a batsman was out or not with 100 per cent accuracy.

"It is a scientifically proven piece of technology that will end all speculation surrounding a dismissal," Nine's head of sport Steve Crawley said.

"If the ball has connected with a player's bat, pad, glove or the ground, it will be revealed by the hot spot."

The device records play using two infra-red cameras that show the minuscule amount of heat generated from the friction when two objects collide.

It then uses computer technology to generate a negative image showing the precise point of contact between the two objects, providing what Nine describes as definitive proof of the ball's passage.

It said the technology could determine whether the ball has nicked the bat for a dismissal or whether a player should be adjudged leg before wicket (lbw) for padding the ball away in the strike zone.

Nine said it had been trialling the technology for 12 months but only collected the equipment from Paris on Saturday for use in the Ashes series that began Thursday.

Nine refused to disclose the cost of its latest toy, which joins "stumpcam", speed cameras, slow-motion replays, the "snickometer" and "hawkeye" in the armoury of technology available to TV commentators.

Crawley said the hot spot was commonly used by the military to track jet fighters and tanks.

However, he refused to name the French company that manufactures the equipment or its cost.

Pakistan bring back Sami

AFP, Multan

Pakistan have brought back pacer Mohammad Sami for their 15-man squad for the third and final cricket Test against the West Indies, chief selector Wasim Bari said Thursday.

"We have made only one change in the squad for the third Test, with Sami back in place of spinner Abdul Rahman," Bari told AFP.

The third Test starts in Karachi on November 27.

Pakistan kept their 1-0 lead intact when they held on for a draw in the second Test at Multan, which ended Thursday.

The 25-year-old Sami was discarded after a poor show on Pakistan's tour of England, where they lost 3-0. He has been criticised for not performing to his potential, having taken 73 wickets in 28 Tests.

But Bari said Sami had regained his confidence after taking 20 wickets in three first-class matches. "Selectors have watched him bowl in the matches and we hope he can deliver," said Bari, a former Pakistan wicketkeeper and captain.

SQUAD

Inzamam-ul-Haq (captain), Imran Farhat, Yasir Hameed, Mohammed Hafeez, Younis Khan, Mohammad Yousuf, Shoaib Malik, Kamran Akmal, Abdul Razaq, Faisal Iqbal, Umar Gul, Shahid Nazir, Samiullah Niaz, Danish Kaneria, Mohammad Sami.

FIFA suspends

FROM PAGE 24 that the IRIFF was not adhering to the principles of the FIFA Statutes regarding the independence of member associations, the independence of the decision-making process of the football governing body in each country and the way in which changes in the leadership of associations are brought about."

FIFA is demanding the establishment of an IRIFF Normalisation Committee appointed by FIFA and the Asian Football Confederation (AFC).

It also wants the IRIFF to draft new statutes and organise new elections.

In August 2006, FIFA and the AFC gave the Iranian federation a deadline of Nov. 15 to reinstate elected president Mohammed Dadgan and to comply with the relevant provisions of the FIFA Statutes.

As this deadline was not met, Iran has been suspended.

They are the second country to face such action in the space of a month. Kenya were suspended on Oct. 24 for failing to respect signed agreements and for recurrent problems in its soccer federation.

Relentless Ricky

Cricket

AFP, Brisbane

Ricky Ponting sensed England's nervousness going into the most hyped Ashes Test series for generations when his strike bowler Steve Harmison spectacularly sprayed his opening delivery for a huge wide at the Gabba here Thursday.

The Australian skipper led the way with an unbeaten 137 as his team made the opening statement in the series, going to stumps on the first day of the Ashes opener at 346 for three, with Mike Hussey not out 63.

The largely anonymous Harmison was the major disappointment for the England team. He was hauled out of the attack after just two overs and did not bowl after tea, to finish the day with 0-52 off 12 overs.

Harmison began the Test with a skewed wide to Justin Langer, the ball zinging through to Flintoff at second slip, to the amusement of the capacity crowd.

"After the first ball went to second slip everyone had a bit more of a lift

about us because that meant the English might have been a little nervous out there," Ponting said.

"Our openers really took advantage of anything that was loose early on and got us off to a great start and then I got in against a not very new ball and the wicket was good, so it was nice to spend a long time out there."

"It's a good start for us all after a long time and we're looking forward to pushing home that advantage tomorrow."

Ponting's rich vein of scoring form continued in the Gabba Test with his ninth century in his past 12 Tests.

At stumps he had batted for 300 minutes and had hit 17 boundaries in his unconquered hundred.

Ponting made it a day of personal milestones in his 106th Test as he equalled Steve Waugh's Australian record of 32 Test hundreds and moved to fourth all-time in Tests.

The 31-year-old also leapfrogged Englishman Graham Gooch and Pakistan's Javed Miandad to become the sixth all-time leading Test scorer.

"The last couple of years for me

have been pretty consistent in Test cricket and just to go out there and spend some time in the middle and build up an innings has been satisfying today (Thursday)," he said.

"I don't think England bowled as well as they had to this morning, but the ball didn't swing or seam at all this morning, which caught us all by surprise, because it normally swings a bit here."

"Our batters took advantage of that and got on top and put the England bowling under pressure from the start, which is something we couldn't do in the last series."

"England had the knack last series of coming on and getting a wicket and getting a breakthrough and then putting the pressure back on us, and we didn't let that happen today."

He added: "England haven't had a great day today but that happens quite a lot in Test cricket. You can have an ordinary day and then have a brilliant start to tomorrow and the whole game can be turned around."

Nerves irked Harmison

Cricket

AFP, Brisbane

Spinner Ashley Giles admitted England strike bowler Steve Harmison was paralysed with nerves after the highly-rated paceman endured a horror start to his Ashes campaign Thursday.

Harmison opened the day's play with a shocking wide delivery that carried to second slip and England captain Andrew Flintoff hauled him off following just two overs as Australia's openers carted him all over Brisbane's Gabba ground.

Harmison never improved from there on and looked a shadow of the bowler who terrorised Australia to help England win the Ashes last year, with Flintoff not even using the Durham quick when he took the new ball after tea.

Harmison ended the day with 0-52 off 12 overs, a far cry from when he set the scene for England's victory last year by hitting Australian captain Ricky Ponting in the grille of his helmet with a delivery.

Giles joked that Harmison's first delivery before an expectant Gabba crowd was merely a "loosener" before conceding that nerves brought upon by the most hyped

series in Ashes history had got the better of the 28-year-old.

"I know he was very nervous, you could see that in him and I could feel that in myself ... he said the ball slipped and that's as much as I know really," Giles told reporters.

He said Harmison, who had complained of a strained side before the last lead-up match in Adelaide, was not injured and attributed his removal from the attack to Flintoff's tactics.

Giles said the whole England squad were jittery as they mounted their Ashes defence.

"We were all pretty tense, the bus was a quiet place this morning," he said.

"We'd all been there before, first day of an Ashes series, you can't really prepare that well, you know you're going to be nervous and you've got to get yourself back into it."

Ponting, who took advantage of the blunted England attack to end the day on an unbeaten 137, said he was surprised Harmison bowled so few overs.

"He was obviously a bit nervous this morning with that first delivery (wide) and I think our guys played him pretty well today (Thursday)."

"We know he's a dangerous bowler, we've all seen how he can get you out with a good delivery, so you

have to pay respect to him whenever he comes on."

The Australian dismissed suggestions that Harmison's woes may be due to the homesickness that marred his early career and said the Englishman would bounce back.

Giles was hopeful the England team could do the same after a demoralising start to its Ashes defence.

"The guys are tired obviously but they will keep their heads up," he said.

"I know this England team, the guys will come out buzzing tomorrow and we'll be looking to pick up some early wickets, that's all we can do. This side doesn't lie down."

Giles, who saw off a challenge from fellow spinner Monty Panesar for a spot in the Gabba side, said he was delighted to be back playing Test cricket after a year out with a hip/hamia injury.

Australian batsman Damien Martyn's wicket was the icing on the cake for the Warwickshire bowler.

"To be back in the side is great, it's been a difficult year," he said. "It a relief to get your name back on the board and get back into it."

Barmy Army silenced

Cricket

AFP, Brisbane

England's "Barmy Army" of supporters remained muted Thursday as Australia dominated the opening day of the most anticipated Ashes battle for generations at Brisbane's Gabba stadium.

England quick Steve Harmison set the tone for the visiting team with his first ball in front of a record 39,000 cricket crowd, a wide to second slip that gave Australian opener Justin Langer no chance of getting bat on leather.

The start of play was greeted with a huge roar from all sections of the crowd, but England fan Craig Millwood later admitted he was winching inwardly.

"I was thinking 'here we go again'," the Herefordshire resident told AFP as he nursed a beer at the close of play.

"It was like watching the opening day in Brisbane four years ago," he added, referring to England's last Test appearance in what has become their bogey ground, when they received a pasting and lost bowler Simon Jones to injury.

Earlier there was optimism from fans decked out in both the red and

white of England's "Barmy Army" and the green and gold of the Australian "Fanatics" as they streamed into the ground, ribbing each other about their team's prospects.

Roads around the ground were choked with traffic as spectators lucky enough to have snared tickets rushed to reach their seats for the start of play.

Those without tickets poured into Brisbane's pubs to watch the match on giant screens, and bosses across the country turned a blind eye as office television sets were tuned into the Ashes coverage.

At one city hotel, AFP spotted a federal senator heading towards his room with a carton of beer, apparently ready to settle in on the couch and watch events at the Gabba as matters of state were relegated to the backburner.

Patrons at the Pineapple Hotel, just down the road from the Gabba, spilled onto the street as they enjoyed an early morning beer in humid 32 degree Celsius (90 Fahrenheit) conditions before making their way to the ground.

"I've been coming to the Gabba Test since I was a boy," Australian fan Justin McMahon told AFP.

"This one's a bit special though - it's not often that Australia have to try to regain the Ashes. It was a bit of a

shock to us to lose last year and we're definitely out for revenge."

At the nearby Story Bridge Hotel, an open-top double decker made its way through the streets carrying cheering members of the Barmy Army, some 40,000 of whom have made the trip Down Under to support their team.

Inside the ground, some spectators ignored the heat and turned up dressed as convicts, Buckingham Palace guards and bowler-hatted businessmen.

The Barmy Army were scattered throughout the stands, limiting their ability to vocally dominate the ground with their football-style chants, and they never really found their voice as Australia smacked England for 3-346. Fanatics member Scott McDermott said the sledging between the fans was always good-natured and never became aggressive.

"We'll always have a beer with them at the end of the day, even if it's only to tell them how bad they've played," he said.

The closeness between the fans was personified by Sydney man Andy Richies, who walked to the Gabba draped in a giant St George cross flag and England football shirt.

Yousuf saves Pakistan

Cricket

AFP, Brisbane

FROM PAGE 21 Mohammed. He not only helped Yousuf in saving the match but also saved his spot for the third Test.

Yousuf, who has been in prolific form in 2006, hit 192 in Pakistan's nine-wicket win in the first Test in Lahore last week.

He has now accumulated 1,562 runs in ten Tests this year. The record of most runs in a calendar year is held by West Indian Richards, who notched 1,710 runs in 11 Tests in 1976.

The third Test starts at National stadium in Karachi from November 27.

SCOREBOARD

Final scoreboard on the fifth day of the second Test between Pakistan and the West Indies at Multan Cricket Stadium on Thursday: PAKISTAN: First innings 357 (Farhat 74, Younis 56, Yousuf 56; Taylor 5-91)

night 213-2)

Hafeez b Taylor 18

Farhat run out 76

Younis c Ramdin b Mohammed 56

Yousuf c Chanderpaul b Mohammed 191

Inzamam lbw b Taylor 10

Malik b Powell 4

Razaq c Chanderpaul b Mohammed 80

Akmal not out 2

Extras: (b-8, lb-10, nb-3, w-3) 24

Total: (For 7 wts in 147.4 overs) 461

Fall of wickets: 1-24, 2-124, 3-243, 4-284, 5-306, 6-458, 7-461

Bowler O M R W

Taylor 25 34 75 2

Collymore 28 9 66 0

Gayle 29 5 85 0

Powell 20 6 47 1

Bravo 13 3