

Taylor misses ton as Aussies get the whip hand

BRISBANE, Nov 30 : Australia took firm control of the first Test with India as they carefully built the foundations for an imposing first innings total on the second day today, reports Reuter.

Australia were just four behind India's first innings total of 239 for the loss only two wickets when bad light halted play 18 minutes early.

Mark Taylor was the chief architect with an innings of 94 and he was ably assisted by Geoff Marsh, who contributed 47 to their 95-run opening partnership.

After their dismissals David Boon and Allan Border went on to the offensive and both were unbeaten at the close, Boon with 59 and his captain 24.

After letting India escape from the depths of 83 for six on Friday Australia were clearly determined to keep a tight grip on the second days proceedings.

The upper order approached their task with a degree of caution some of their supporters at Brisbane's Gabba

Ground thought excessive. By mid-afternoon they were jerking "boring, boring".



MARK TAYLOR...94

But those who stycd were rewarded in the closing session as Border embellished Australia's mounting score

with huge sixes into the crowd at the expense of Kapil Dev and spinner Venkatapathy Raju.

While Indian Test debutante Jawagal Srinath, who has clearly benefited from coaching by Australia's Dennis Lillee, is quite nippy, India's bowling attack is just what Australian coach Bobby Simpson would have ordered.

Taylor, whose last Test knock was 144 in Antigua against the West Indies, has been struggled in domestic cricket this season but played his way back into form.

Having survived an early leg-before appeal and took 144 balls to post his 50.

But, after nearly being caught by Sachin Tendulkar at deep square leg he added 44 in 76 deliveries and clearly fancied an eighth Test century when he top-edged on to his forearm and was caught by Dilip Vengsarkar running around from slip.

"It all seemed to come back after tea," said Taylor, who added that he thought Australia had a strong chance of forcing a result. His opening partner,

Marsh, became Srinath's first Test wicket playing a lazy drive but Boon, who passed 4,000 Test runs, and Border were never troubled as the Indians tired.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard on the second day of the first Test between Australia and India today.

INDIA:
First innings 239 (M Prabhakar 54 not out, C McDermott five for 54)

AUSTRALIA:
First innings
G Marsh b Srinath...47
M Taylor c Vengsarkar b Raju...94

D Boon not out...59
A Border not out...24
Extras (lb-7 w-1 nb-3)...11
Total (For two wickets)...235

Did not bat: D Jones, M Waugh, I Healy, P Taylor, C McDermott, M Hughes, M Whitney.

Fall of wickets: 1-95, 2-178

BOWLING:				
	O	M	R	W
Kapil Dev	19	6	43	0 (1nb)
Prabhakar	20	2	9	42 (1nb)
Srinath	18	3	52	1(1nb)
Raju	27	4	83	1
Tendulkar	1	0	8	0



India's Manoj Prabhakar (C) ducks as a high ball from Australia's Craig McDermott passes over the wickets on the first day of the first Test in the five Test series in Brisbane on Nov 29. —AFP photo

Leconte puts France level

LYON, France, Nov 30 : Henri Leconte, the forgotten man of tennis, pulled off a sensational straight sets victory over Pete Sampras to level the Davis Cup final between France and the United States on Friday, reports Reuter.

Leconte, ranked only 161st in the world and with barely any serious match practice in the past six months, beat the world number six 6-4, 7-5, 6-4.

Earlier, Andre Agassi had given the defending champions a 1-0 lead with a 6-7, 6-2, 6-1, 6-2 win over French number one Guy Forget.

Few expected Leconte to square the tie at the end of the first day against the on-form Sampras, recent winner of the ATP tour World Championship title.

But the Frenchman, urged on by 8,000 wildly cheering fans in the Palais Des Sports, played like a man inspired against the American, who was making his Davis Cup debut.

When a Sampras return landed in the net on the second match point, Leconte leaped into the air, then rushed over to non-playing captain Yannick Noah and jumped into his arms.

"This is the greatest day in my life," an excited Leconte said. "It's the best win of my

career. "I've proved that I'm still around. We haven't won the Davis Cup yet we are still in with a chance."

"The crowd was fabulous. They gave me fantastic support and I gave everything I had."

Leconte, who had the third back operation of his career in July after getting injured at Wimbledon, had played only one match on the ATP tour since.

But he showed no signs of rustiness or lack of match fitness as he took on Sampras, producing some of the best tennis of his career as he attacked the net from the start and pulled off some stunning touch shots.

The normally unflappable Sampras looked bewildered by it all and seemed unable to find a way to combat the brilliant Frenchman.

Sampras, who started the match uncomfortably when the crowd cheered as he double-faulted on the first point, never looked at ease.

He was broken by Leconte as early as the third game of the first set and, though he broke straight back, the Frenchman took the next American service to love to move in front again.

Sampras had six break points in the match after that but Leconte was able to conjure up a little bit of magic on each one to keep the American

out. Leconte broke at 5-5 in the second set and 4-4 in the third, going on to serve out each set without problem.

"Henri did what I expected," Noah said. "We still believe we can do it. We badly want to win this Davis Cup."

It was astonishing that a player ranked outside the



HENRI LECONTE

world's top 150 should produce the performance of the day when all the other singles players on court came from the top 10.

Leconte even produced more aces — 11 — than either Forget or Sampras, both more noted than he as big servers.

Leconte's performance even booked him a place in today's doubles alongside Forget.

Noah originally nominate the inexperienced Arnaud Boetsch to partner Forget but decided to change his line-up

after watching Leconte, his old Davis Cup doubles partner, in action.

The Americans field the richly experienced partnership of Ken Flach and Robert Seguso in what could now be the crucial rubber.

France have not won the Davis Cup since 1932 but Leconte's upset has given them a sporting chance of victory which few outsiders believed in before the start of the tie.

The French had put quest of their hopes in world number seven Forget but he disappointed after taking a first set tiebreak 9-7 on his fifth set point and was barely in the match after that.

World number 10 Agassi was in superb form, firing winning returns and blistering groundstrokes from the baselines as he dominated the next three sets.

The first set was physically and emotionally draining and I think it tired him more than it did me," Agassi said.

"But this final isn't over yet," he added prophetically. "Forget has lost and Sampras could still lose and so could I. The Davis Cup is like that."

Forget, who could not find his usually consistent big first serve, said he had been simply outclassed.

"It's like when you're fighting against Mike Tyson," he said. "There's not much you can do."

Fitness problems beset Windies

PERTH, Australia, Nov 30 : Fast bowler Ian Bishop is under a cloud with a back problem and four other players have flu as the West Indies prepare for the opening game of their Australian programme, reports AFP.

This was confirmed here Friday by team manager, Deryck Murray, only two days before Sunday's bush pipe-opener in the country town of Northam, north of here.

He said Bishop had stiffness in the back and it was too early to now exactly what the prob-

lem was. "He had a stress fracture in the back a year ago and had not played any serious cricket until recently."

"It's obviously very different when he is putting everything into it, as he was in the two recent one-day internationals in which he played in Pakistan."

"We hope his problem is just a little reaction to hard work. The only way the problem can be described is as a pain which is uncomfortable."

Murray said the four players suffering with flu were fast

bowler Malcolm Marshall, all-rounder Carl Hooper, both bad enough to be confined to bed, and new opening batsman Philo Wallace and paceman Anderson Cummins.

All four were on medication, he said.

The tourists meet a Western Australian invitation XI in Sunday's one-day carnival fixture.

The serious business starts Wednesday when the tourists clash with Western Australia, a formidable one-day team, in a day-night limited overs match

at the Waca Ground here.

Murray said: "It is a major worry when people are not fit. We have 15 players and we need to keep everybody going, otherwise we could start struggling, and it is a downhill slide once things start going wrong."

Meanwhile, West Indies captain Richie Richardson has blamed the heavy international programme faced by cricketers for some of the injuries to pace bowlers.

"There is far too much cricket, especially one-day cricket, being played today," declared Richardson.

"The guys do not get a chance to recuperate from injury."

"I also think it (the amount of cricket) might have an effect on the standard of the game, even though the standard seems to be rising. I think that if guys had a bit more time to think about the game, to practice a bit more to work on certain things, then I can see them producing more and improving faster."

Richardson pointed out that when his squad completed the world triangular series with Australia and India in January it would fly home for three weeks to play in domestic cricket before returning in mid-February, to prepare for the World Cup.

"So it's just non-stop cricket," he said. "I hope our players are not worn out by the time they get to the World Cup. We will certainly give it all we have got."

Reeve set to tour NZ

LONDON, Nov 30 : Warwickshire all-rounder Dermot Reeve is expected to be called up next week for England's tour of New Zealand, reports AFP.

Hong Kong-born Reeve was put on stand-by for England's Test tour of New Zealand and the World Cup campaign when Graham Gooch's squad was announced in September.

Reeve is expected to get the place of Middlesex seamer Angus Fraser, who has all but given up hope of being fit by the time England fly out on December 27.

Fraser will see a surgeon next week following his hip operation, but a Test and County Cricket Board spokesman admitted: "The prospects of him being fit to go to New Zealand are not hopeful. He is still waling with

the aid of crutches.

"The England committee will be meeting at the end of next week to review the situation in the light of reports we shall be receiving from the surgeon."

Unless he is told to rest completely, Fraser is likely to seek club cricket in Australia in hope of proving his fitness for the World Cup which starts on February 22.

England's selectors will also need to consider Mike Atherton's situation.

The Lancashire batsman is recovering from a back operation and Gooch and the selectors may reconsider a decision not to name a standby replacement.

Atherton and Gooch are the only recognised openers in the party to play three Tests against New Zealand and the World Cup campaign.

Border to lead Prime Minister's XI

BRISBANE, Nov 30 : Allan Border, now leading the Australian team in the first Test against India, will captain the Prime Minister's XI in the annual match against visiting India at Manuka Oval, Canberra, on December 17, reports Reuter.

Prime Minister Bob Hawke is involved in selecting the team, which traditionally contains a number of aspiring internationals and last year defeated England by 31 runs.

The teams, named on Saturday, is: Allan Border (Captain), Michael Bevan, Greg Blewett, Damien Fleming, Dave Gilbert, Matthew Hayden, Damien Martyn, Greg Rowell, Jamie Siddons, Shane Warne, Tim Zohrer, Ian Garrity (12th man).

Safety plans inadequate: UK doctors

LONDON, Nov 30 : A new eight-point plan to make boxing safer will not stop potentially dangerous injuries, the British medical board warned on Friday, reports AFP.

Under the plan, unveiled by the Boxing Board of Control, hospital units nearest the venue will be on stand-by, adequate resuscitation equipment will be at ringside and ambulances on site.

But the BMA, which wants to ban all boxing, said that although the plan was welcome, potentially dangerous injuries would still occur.

Dr. Jeff Cundy, a member of the BMA's boxing working party, said: "Though we welcome anything which reduces harm to the boxer, and further damage can be reduced by rapid transit to hospital, it can

do nothing to stop the initial injury. "Blows to the head damage the brain and the damage is cumulative."

His comments came at a BMA news conference supporting the bill, introduced in the House of Lords by Lord Taylor of Gryfe, which seeks to ban boxing for profit.

"It doesn't go as far as we would like, as we have campaigned for a ban on boxing."

Jamalpur soccer

JAMALPUR, Nov 30 : The final match of Group 'Ga' of the Shaheed Smriti Gold Cup football tournament ended in a draw here on Friday, reports UNB.

Both Dhaka East Bengal Sporting Club and Dewanganj Kheolar Samity scored two goals each.

The match will be replayed on December 3

Botham to take int'l side to SA

JOHANNESBURG, Nov 30 : England all-rounder Ian Botham wants to take an international side to South Africa at the end of the 1992/93 season, United Cricket Board of South Africa managing director Ali Bacher said here, reports AFP.

Botham, who is on a two-week promotional tour of the country, asked Bacher on Monday about bringing a side for two or three limited-over matches.

He said the team would comprise leading players and all the money raised would be donated to charity, Bacher added.

Botham's request will be passed on to the UCBSA management committee, but the possibility of a tour will only be discussed after next year's World Cup in Australia and New Zealand.

ITF SATELLITE CIRCUIT: AN EPILOGUE

By Baseline

O reader! Let us recapitulate the salient features of the tennis event of the year, namely the four-legged men's professional tennis circuit currently nearing conclusion on the hard courts of the Karachi Gymkhana in Pakistan.

Conceived of primarily by some ardent tennis lovers and patrons in Pakistan, and subsequently sanctioned courtesy of the Development Trust Funds of the ITF, the Satellite comprised three legs and a masters. The first two legs were staged in the first and second weeks of last month in Dhaka and Rajshahi respectively. The third leg was staged in Lahore and the Masters is currently in progress in Karachi.

As you all know, players are awarded circuit points based on how they fare in each of the first three legs. At the end of the third leg, the top twenty four point holders are eligible to play in the Masters event. Once this comes about a player's lifelong ambition is fulfilled in that he is guaranteed some ATP points which enable him to get a world ranking, in order to have any serious aspirations in achieving

this elusive objective, participation in all the legs is a must. In spite of numerous gaffes, the ITF managed to muster the wits to organise the first two legs. The attendance of local and foreign dignitaries including those holding public offices and high diplomatic portfolios lent colour to this otherwise listless affair. The honourable Prime Minister even went to the extreme length of inaugurating the second leg in Rajshahi, such was the extent of her goodwill and commitment towards sports in general and tennis in particular.

Sadly, the more seasoned ITF officials lacked either the verve or intelligence to see this event through to its successful conclusion. Initially they were so lackadaisical in their attitude that they completely ignored the top three players in the country. Having successfully accomplished this shameful task they then set about trying to organise the participation of the second and third strings. One the tour took off from Dhaka to Rajshahi, the nucleus of the ITF management lost interest in all further proceedings. So negligent were the officials that they even failed to keep track of the performance of the Bangladeshi players who had played in the two legs.

At the end of the second leg, Hiralal and Sami Razzak, ranked number four and number six respectively in the country, were apparently given the go-ahead by the ITF to participate in the third leg in Lahore. These two consequently proceeded to make travel arrangements. On the night of the 18th of November, Mr Sandru Salam, an unwanted, unloved and generally unpopular eye-sore on the local tennis scene (who incidentally is coach-cum-manager-cum-captain-cum-administrator-cum-etc. of any team that the ITF manages to put together) had to intervene in the proceedings for the umpteenth time. What ensued can only be described as total confusion and a tragic waste of all the effort and millions of Take that went into hosting this event.

Calling Sami Razzak over phone on the night of the 18th, Sandru told him that he could not go to Pakistan as Shahed Mirza, another local unranked lad, had one circuit

point more than him and should go instead. On the morning of the 19th, the day of the flight, Shahed approached Sami with a letter from Sandru on the official Bangladesh Tennis Federation letter head stating that it was suggested to Sandru in his telephonic conversation with Khondaker Asaduzzaman, the President of the ITF that if Shahed had more circuit points than Sami then the former should go. Both Shahed and Sami were stymied and overwhelmed by this development. Time being extremely short, both of them decided to proceed to the airport from where they decided they would ring Mr Asaduzzaman in the hope of clearing up the matter of who had originally been nominated and who should actually go. This was a necessity since both had the courtesy not to defy even a vague ITF order!

But alas! Shahed turned up half an hour later than his committed time. They could not reach Mr Asaduzzaman in time. Meanwhile PIA, the carriers, awarded their seats to other awaiting passengers. Thus, both Sami and Shahed as well as the totally bewildered and shattered but definitely eligible Hiralal all missed the plane.

The question posing us now, dear reader, (if you have still managed to hang on to your sanity) is how could such a comedy, nay, tragedy of errors have come to pass? To answer this, one has to go beneath the epithelial tissues and the subcutaneous layers of the ITF body. What emerges is the existence of an organisation comprising juggernauts on the local scene, but with neither collective nor individual commitment to the propagation or perpetuation of tennis. Firstly, the even being purely a professional one, the ITF like all other tennis federations, should not have gotten involved in player politics and selection in the first place. Secondly, if they had decided to nominate somebody, they should have stuck to their guns! But what is fatally dangerous is that somebody like Sandru Salam could issue a letter using the name of the good ITF President, who is a senior Secretary in the Government and somebody renowned for his managerial skills,

not deficiencies! Going through the text of Sandru's letter to Sami, this poor correspondent had no option but to conclude that either the ITF President was a Hamlet, hesitating to make the most rudimentary of decisions, or Mr Sandru had overstepped his limit of authority one more time and thus nullified all the blood, sweat, tears and takas that had gone into staging this circuit in Bangladesh.

If this sends shudders down one's spine, one can be justifiably pardoned. The ITF, has supposedly undergone reorganisation. Yours truly hates to say this, but this may have resulted in a classical case of coming out of the frying pan only to fall into the fire. While a particular tennis player was singularly patronised by the ITF (on the strength of his parent's position) during the last regime, the situation in the federation seems to have magnified manifold. A free-for-all is now in progress in the magnificent conference room of the ITF with a bit of the spoils for anyone who bothers to get dirty in this squalid.

But is this fair or rational? Does anybody have the unchallenged right to declare the ITF his own fiefdom and through engaging in harmful politics despatch the tennis movement to limbo? Can personal prejudice be allowed to systematically destabilise and disintegrate the very fabric of tennis in the country? I say thee nay!

The only possible solution is for the Ministry of Youth and Sports to step in and prevent the ITF from imploding. During the last autocratic regime, it was the Sports Ministry in general and an incorruptible and brave Secretary in particular who consistently opposed such madness and came down on corrupt officials with a great deal of success. The time has come again. Tennis lovers all over the country are now imploring the Ministry to make good on their promise and disband the federation. Free and fair elections should follow, allowing true lovers of the game to come to the front and contribute to the development of the game. Otherwise this correspondent is afraid this will be one more very expensive flower, having tremendous potential, that will have failed to blossom.



Winners in the 9th Bangladesh amateur golf championships seen with chief guest Lt.General M.Nuruddin Khan (6th from right) at the prize-giving ceremony held at the Kurmitola Golf Club yesterday evening. —Star photo