

Mustaq mesmerises Aussies

HOBART, Nov 17: Pakistan leg-spinner Mushtaq Ahmed claimed five wickets in the best bowling performance of his Test career as the tourists restored some pride in the second test against Australia on Friday, reports Reuter.

Mushtaq, recalled by Pakistan after their humiliating innings defeat in the first Test, tore through Australia's middle order as the home side staggered to 267 all out in their first innings at Bellerive Oval.

But his celebrations were dampened late in the day when he returned to the middle as nightwatchman only to lose his wicket first ball for a duck.

It was Australian fast bowler Glenn McGrath's second wicket in successive balls after he removed opener Salim Elahi for 13, his third failure in a row in the three-Test Series.

At close of play on an eventful first day, Pakistan were 33 for two, with opener Aamir Sohail unbeaten on 15 Rameez Raja on four.

Mushtaq, who replaced off-spinner Saqlain Mushtaq, completed his first five-wicket haul in 19 Test appearances with prized scalp of Mark Waugh, who led Australia's resistance with a fine 88.

Steve Waugh, who scored an undefeated century in the first Test in Brisbane, all-rounder Greg Blewett, wicketkeeper Ian Healy and pace bowler Paul Reiffel also fell to Mushtaq's guile.

Mushtaq finished with figures of five for 115 from 30 overs after bowling almost uninterrupted for four hours from the southern end.

Those figures eclipsed his previous best figures of four for 121 in third Test against Australia in Lahore last year.

It was a fitting response by the tourists, who were mesmerised in the first Test by Australian leg-spinner Shane Warne, who took 11 wickets in Pakistan's defeat by an innings and 126 runs.

Mark Waugh raced past his fifty in just 61 balls before curbing his natural aggression as he tried to hold the innings together.

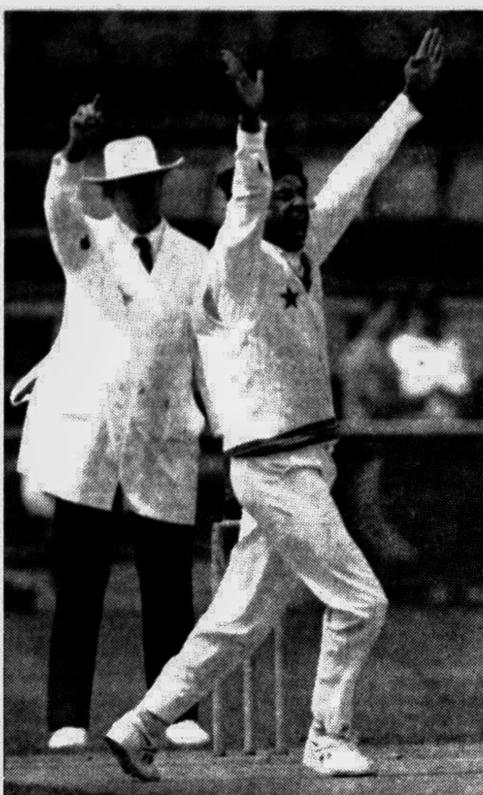
He eventually lofted a catch to Rameez in the outfield to end a 223-minute stay at the crease, where he faced 151 balls and hit eight fours.

Pakistan captain and fast bowler Wasim Akram, who finished with three wickets, shouldered the early burden by trapping opener Michael Slater leg before wicket with a yorker on the sixth ball of the innings without a run on the board.

After winning the toss on what appeared to be a placid wicket, Australia's innings failed to gather momentum at any stage despite a stubborn innings by captain Mark Taylor, who was bowled by Wasim for 40.

Taylor and Boon had earlier rallied Australia after Slater's dismissal by adding 68 runs for the second wicket before a run out ended the partnership just before lunch.

Boon failed to recover his ground after setting off for a



Pakistan captain Wasim Akram is ecstatic after dismissing Australian opener Michael Slater leg before wicket without scoring on the opening day of the second Test match at Hobart, Australia yesterday. — AFP/UNB photo



MUSTAQAQ ... 5 for 115

quick single. There was some confusion surrounding the dismissal because the television link to the third umpire in the pavilion broke down several minutes before the incident.

In the absence of television replays of the incident, the decision was left to English umpire Dickie Bird, who ruled Boon out.

In addition to recalling Mushtaq, Pakistan made one other change to the side humiliated in Brisbane, leaving out injured former captain and middle order batsman Salim Malik in favour of Ijaz Ahmed.

Malik was restricted in practice after requiring six stitches in a cut to his left

hand sustained during the first Test. It was a further disappointment for Malik who has failed in his three innings to tour.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard on the first day of the second Test between Australia and Pakistan at Bellerive Oval on Friday:

AUSTRALIA: First innings

Taylor b Wasim	40
Slater lbw b Wasim Akram	0
Boon run out	34
M Waugh c Rameez Raja	88
b Mushtaq	7
S Waugh c Moin b Mushtaq	7
Blewett b Mushtaq	0
Healy c Basit b Mushtaq	37
Reiffel c M Akram b Mushtaq	14
Warne not out	27
McDermott b Waqar	0
McGrath b Wasim	3
Extras: (b-3, lb-9, nb-5)	17
Total: (all out in 78.3 overs)	267
Fall of wickets: 1-0; 2-68; 3-111; 4-156; 5-156; 6-211; 7-235; 8-238; 9-244.	
Bowling:	O M R W
Wasim	18.3 7 42 3
Waqar	17 3 54 1
M Akram	10 1 41 0
Mushtaq	30 5 115 5
Sohail	3 1 3 0

PAKISTAN: First innings

Elahi b McGrath	13
Sohail not out	15
Mushtaq lbw b McGrath	0
Rameez not out	4
Extras: (lb-1)	1
Total (for two wickets in nine overs)	33
Fall of wickets: 1-24; 2-24.	
To bat: Inzamamul Haq, Basit Ali, Ijaz Ahmed, Moin Khan, Wasim Akram, Waqar Younis, Mohammad Akram.	
Bowling:	O M R W
McDermott	5 0 19 0
McGrath	4 0 13 2

Div I chess

Sports Reporter

Title aspirants Mohammad Sporting Club maintained their solo lead in the First Division Chess League when they blanked Genius Chess Club 4-0 in their 12th engagement yesterday at the chess room of Bangladesh Chess Federation.

In yesterday's round, two MSC foreigners — GM Mikhail Krasenkov of Russia and GM Ashot Anasthian of Armenia — won their respective boards against Aminul Islam and Kazi Taherul Islam. GM Niaz Murshed and Enamul Hossain Rajib completed the day's victory beating Akhlakur Rahman and M A Majid respectively.

With their twelfth successive win yesterday, Mohammadans remained atop the standings having 45 points to their account out of possible 48 points. They are now leading second-placed Bangladesh Biman who also registered a 4-0 victory over Mohakhali Pradeep Sangha yesterday. Biman's two local International Masters — Ziaur Rahman and Reefat bin Sattar — defeated Altaf Hossain and Jahangir of Pradeep Sangha respectively. In the other two boards, Khandker Kayes Hasan tamed Saidul Islam while Rezaul Haque beat Idris.

The win raised Biman's tally to 42.5 points from 12 matches, still 2.5 points adrift of MSC.

In the other encounters of the day, third position holders Leonine Chess Club earned a 2.5-1.5 win over Narayanganj Chess Club, Bangladesh Textiles Mills Corporation (BTMC) outplayed Fire Service team 4-0, Dhaka University beat Bangladesh Ansars 2.5-1.5, Sheikh Russel Krija Chakra blanked Fara-shganj Sporting Club 4-0, Anushilan Chess Club outsmarted Konica Sangskritik Sangha 3-1 and defending champions Brothers Union suffered yet another 0-4 defeat at the hands of Mashgul Mahfil of Narayanganj.

The next round of the League will start today afternoon at 2:00 pm at the same venue.

All eyes on Newcastle

LONDON, Nov 17: Runaway English Premiership leaders Newcastle will be taking nothing for granted when they travel to Aston Villa on Saturday despite the cushion of an eight point lead over Manchester United, reports AFP.

Inspired by the summer signings of French star David Ginola and topscorer Les Ferdinand, Kevin Keegan's magpies have got off to a flying start, winning 11 of their 13 fixtures and scoring 30 goals in the process.

But Keegan, whose side made the early running at the start of last season before falling off the pace and eventually missing out on a UEFA Cup place, will have taken on board the lessons of recent history.

Reflecting on Newcastle's 1-0 win over reigning champions Blackburn Rovers last week, Manchester United Manager Alex Ferguson said: "We had a nine-point advantage over Leeds in 1991-92 and lost it, and also led Blackburn by 15 points the following season but they whittled it down to just two at one stage."

"Last term Blackburn had an 11-point margin but in the end only won the championship by one point on the last day of the season," added the United boss whose young side travel to Southampton.

Much will depend in Saturday's match on whether sixth-placed Villa, who thumped West Ham 4-1 in their last outing, can cut the supply line from Ginola on the left and Keith Gillespie on the right to in-form Ferdinand.

Centre-forward Ferdinand, a six-million-pound signing from QPR, has scored many of his 17 goals this season from crosses but such is the talent throughout the side that Villa would be unwise to ignore the threat from elsewhere.

Saturday also features potentially explosive derby encounters between Liverpool and Everton at Anfield and Tottenham and Arsenal at White Hart Lane.

Fifth-placed Liverpool have had an unhappy time of late, losing 2-1 at Newcastle in their last outing despite dominating the match, shortly after they were surprisingly bundled out of the UEFA Cup by Danish side Brondby.

Everton lie 13th in the table but go into the match buoyed by an impressive 1-0 win over Blackburn ten days ago.

Current form will also be a secondary consideration in north London where fourth-placed Arsenal meet ninth-placed Tottenham Hotspur.

Muster misses his cue



FRANKFURT, Nov 17: Wimbledon champion Pete Sampras was crowned the king of tennis for the third consecutive year on Thursday but soon learned that he has no royal right to win, reports Reuter.

Austrian rival Thomas Muster's second loss at the ATP Tour World Championship — a 6-4, 4-6, 6-4 defeat by American Jim Courier — made sure Sampras will finish the year at the top of the world rankings for the third season in succession.

But within a few hours of the Austrian world number three's failure to reach the semifinals, the US Open champion Sampras lost the last of his three round-robin matches 7-6, 4-6, 6-3 to South African Wayne Ferreira.

The defeat did not have too much meaning for Sampras who is still sure of his place in the semifinals after two victories in the White Group.

But Ferreira, a late replacement for the injured Andre Agassi, proved the American is not perfect despite becoming the first man to top the rankings three years running since Ivan Lendl in 1987.

Muster, the 28-year-old French Open champion, was the only player who had a chance to pick up enough points in Frankfurt to dislodge Sampras from the

number one spot at the year-ending championship. After 12 titles this year, including his first triumph at a Grand Slam at Roland Garros, the Austrian was thought to be in with a chance of winning the tournament and reaching the top spot for the first time.

But after two disappointing defeats in the round-robin stage at the hands of Michael Chang and Courier,



THOMAS MUSTER

the Austrian failed to even put any pressure on Sampras at this, the most prestigious event outside of the four Grand Slams.

"At important moments I made to many mistakes," Muster said. "But I am not too disappointed... I have no real complaints. I had a really positive feeling about this

season and the improvement of my game."

Last month Ferreira, ranked ninth in the world, beat Sampras in the final of the Lyon indoor tournament. After losing a tight opening match to Boris Becker, the South African was clearly fired up for Thursday's encounter.

"No matter what happens I will remember this match," Ferreira said. "It proves that Lyon was not a one-off thing."

Sampras said: "He beat me fair and square, when he is on (form), he's one of the best players I play."

Sampras felt proud to join the likes of Lendl, John McEnroe and Jimmy Connors in the record books as men who have all held the top spot for at least three years.

"It is great to end it (at the top) three times in a row. What else can you do?" he said. "I hope I can stay healthy and do it again next year."

"I think only three other guys have done it. To be in that same page is certainly something I will appreciate later on down when my career is over."

The top two players in the two groups qualify for Saturday's semifinals.

In the Red Group, Sweden's Thomas Enqvist, the youngest player in the field, moved confidently towards the last four with a 6-1, 6-4 victory over Chang, his second victory of the tournament.

Brolin on way to England

STOCKHOLM, Nov 17: Tomas Brolin left Sweden on Thursday for England to join Leeds for a record fee, the Swedish news agency TT quoted his agent as saying, reports Reuter.

Lars Peterson, the agent who joined Brolin on the flight from Norrkoping, gave no financial details but said the transfer would make Brolin Sweden's most expensive player.

Brolin played in Sweden's European Championship qualifier against Turkey on Wednesday night but has failed to win a regular place with his Italian Serie A club Parma since suffering a broken ankle a year ago.

Peterson said the contract would be for the remainder of the current season and two further seasons.

"Tomas will be the most expensive Swedish soccer player of all time, by a wide margin," Peterson said.

Swedish news reports have put the transfer fee at about 8 million dollars of which Leeds would pay 1 million dollars this season and the rest over two and a half years.

Brolin had earlier refused to confirm or deny the reported move and TT said he was believed to have wanted more than the 10,000 pounds sterling (15,600 dollars) weekly wage that Leeds were offering.

Stone ends England drought

LONDON, Nov 17: Forest star Steve Stone scored his first international goal as England put an end to their goal-drought with an impressive 3-1 win over Switzerland at Wembley on Wednesday, reports AFP.

Stone, the 24-year-old known as "bulldog", was called off the bench after only six minutes when Liverpool's Jamie Redknapp pulled up with a hamstring injury.

The busy right flanker had an outstanding game, laying on Teddy Sheringham's second international goal and crowning his second cap with his first goal 11 minutes from time.

Jubilant Stone said: "I was a bit worried the boss might bring Peter Beardsley on when I came on because of my lack of experience and I'm glad he kept faith with me."

"I was told to go on and try and cause them a few problems down the right, which I think I did. It's a great honour to play for England and I hope to win more caps."

Forest teammate Stuart Pearce dragged England back into the game after 45 minutes with their first goal in more than four hours — following goalless draws against Colombia and Norway — but his ferocious drive was credited as an own goal after deflecting off Yvan Quantin.

The breakthrough was a huge relief for beleaguered Terry Venables, who must have feared the worst four minutes earlier when Adrian Knup claimed his 26th goal in 43 internationals with a glancing header.

Stone fulfilled the promise of his 22-minute cameo in last month's 0-0 draw in Oslo when his precision cross from the right gave the loosely-marked Sheringham the chance to leap high and glance his header deep into the far corner after 56 minutes.

Graf leads German blitz



NEW YORK, Nov 17: World number one Steffi Graf continued her mastery over American

Mary Joe Fernandez on Thursday with a 6-3, 6-4 quarter-final victory at the WTA Tour Championships, reports Reuter.

The win on the blue carpet at Madison Square Garden put Graf into the semifinals of the season-ending tournament for the eighth time in 11 consecutive appearances in the prestigious 16-player event.

The top-seeded German raised her career record against eighth seed Fernandez to a perfect 13-0 and has dropped just two sets to the American in all those encounters.

"Her game is a game I like to play against," said Graf, winner of eight titles this year including three of the four Grand Slams.

"Even though she is aggressive, she gives me time to do things," said the three-time champion of the WTA Tour Championships.

Anke Huber made it a German sweep on Thursday with a 3-6, 6-2, 6-1 win over sixth seed Kimiko Date of Japan, who had taken a perfect 8-0 indoor record this year into the match.

But from 2-2 in the second set, the 12th-ranked Huber seized control of the match, running off nine games in a row in building her 5-0 third-set lead. Huber surrendered just six points to the fourth-ranked Date, who had reached the semifinals here last year.

In Saturday's semifinals, Huber will play the winner of Friday's match between second seed Conchita Martinez and 14th-ranked Brenda Schultz-McCarthy.

Graf gets either fifth-

seeded defending champion Gabriela Sabatini or Natasha Zvereva, who upset third seed Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario in the first round.

Either way, Graf should have the upperhand if she serves the way she did on Thursday.

Graf put 71 per cent of her first serves in play against Fernandez and even hit a couple of aces that broke the 100 miles per hour (160 kph) barrier.

"I'm wearing a dress, maybe that makes me serve better," she joked about the outfit that got so much attention when she first appeared in it on Tuesday.

"My serve was really important: I could earn quite a lot of free points of it," she added.

Indeed, after saving three break points in the fifth game of the first set, Graf never faced another break point.

Fernandez actually played well enough to beat a lot of players on Monday. Steffi Graf is just not one of them.

Spain sink Macedonia

ELCHE, Spain, Nov 17: Kiko Narvaez, the striker who led Spain to Olympic glory in Barcelona, celebrated his recall to the senior national side with a well-taken goal in their 3-1 European Championship win over Macedonia on Wednesday, reports Reuter.

Kiko's fine performance should ensure him a place in the Spanish squad in the finals in England in June after a two year absence from the national team.

Shaking loose his marker to head home a cross from Jose Amavisca after eight minutes, Kiko came close several times in the early stages.



Anke Huber of Germany plays a backhand return against Japanese Kimiko Date during their WTA Tour Championships quarterfinal match in New York on Nov 16. Huber won 3-6, 6-2, 6-1. — AFP/UNB photo

Top of table clash in Italy

PARIS, Nov 17: Roberto Baggio and George Weah return to the Serie A this weekend as AC Milan face Parma in a potential thriller between the Italian league leaders, reports AFP.

The two clubs, who have identical points and scoring records, meet on Parma's home turf. However, the return from injury of World Cup hero Baggio and Liberian ace Weah will do much for Milanese morale.

Baggio has also had comforting words from Italian national coach Arrigo Sacchi, telling him that only injuries have kept him out of the recent European Championship qualifiers.

"I'll make me happy to wear the (national) blue shirt again," Baggio said. "The fact that my absence is down to injury and not technical choices does reassure me."

Milan will be without Montenegrin playmaker Dejan Savicevic, while Parma's Italian international midfielder Massimo Crippa is doubtful with an abductor muscle injury.

However, the home side will doubtless be buoyed up by Gianfranco Zola's two goals in Italy's 4-0 win over Lithuania on Wednesday night.

If the match is certain to top the chart in Italy this weekend, the undercard could also provide fireworks with struggling champions Juventus hosting third-place

Florentina. Juventus, so impressive in the European Champion's League, have lost both their last two outings in the Serie A, against Udinese (1-0) and Lazio (4-0), and are now six points adrift.

Juventus ace Fabrizio Ravanelli, who scored twice for Italy at the weekend against Ukraine, has called for his teammates to pull themselves together. However, a similar call the week before from strike partner Gianluca Vialli apparently went unheeded.

Florentina, who welcome back Argentine striker Gabriel Batistuta, will not be making any concessions. They can go top of the table if they win and the Parma-Milan game ends in a stalemate.

Inter Milan, whose coach Roy Hodgson watched his Swiss side beaten 3-1 by England at Wembley in midweek, are at home to Udinese. Inter will have to watch out for German striker Oliver Bierhoff, a revelation this season with seven goals in nine games, the second best strike rate in the country.

Saturday is derby day in Spain, with leaders Atletico Madrid taking on Real Madrid.

Little is going right for Real in the league where they languish in seventh place, and a whopping 12 points off the pace. The knives are already beginning to come out for club president Ramon Mendoza.