

Sport

Steve to miss Sydney Test

BRISBANE, Nov 26: Australia recalled all-rounder Greg Blewett on Tuesday as replacement for injured Steve Waugh for the second Test against West Indies starting in Sydney on Friday, reports Reuter.

Leg spinner Peter McIntyre was also added to a 13-man squad in an otherwise unchanged line-up. The squad will be reduced to 12 after a Thursday training session.

West Indies, who lost the first Test by 123 runs on Tuesday, may be without fast bowler Kenneth Benjamin for the encounter at the Sydney Cricket Ground.

Benjamin hurt his left knee in Brisbane and was rated a doubtful starter by West Indies captain Courtney Walsh.

Blewett has played nine Tests for Australia, including four during Australia's series win against West Indies in the Caribbean early last year.

The 25-year-old right-hander fell out of favour with selectors after that tour and was dropped for Australia's three-Test series against Sri Lanka later last year.

Waugh ruled himself out of contention for the Sydney Test after suffering a groin injury while bowling during West Indies first innings on Sunday.

McIntyre played on Australia's recent unsuccessful tour to India after leg-spinner Shane Warne withdrew because of injury.

McIntyre has played two Tests for Australia, against India last month and England in Adelaide two years ago.

His inclusion indicates Australia may consider pairing him with Warne on a pitch which is traditionally receptive to slow bowling.

SQUAD

AUSTRALIA: Mark Taylor (captain), Matthew Elliott, Ricky Ponting, Mark Waugh, Greg Blewett, Michael Bevan, Ian Healy, Shane Warne, Paul Reiffel, Glenn McGrath, Michael Kasprowicz, Jason Gillespie, Peter McIntyre.



Glenn McGrath (3rd from R) is being congratulated by teammates after bowling West Indian Shivnarine Chanderpaul out at the Gabba yesterday. — APP/UNB photo

Windies stoop to Aussies

BRISBANE, Nov 26: Australia took a 1-0 lead in their quest to retain the Frank Worrell Trophy by beating the West Indies by 123 runs in the first cricket Test at the Gabba on Tuesday, reports AP.

Set to make 420 runs to win, the West Indies were bowled out for 296 seven minutes into the last hour despite a back-to-the-wall century from opener Sherwin Campbell.

captulated around him — largely through to some irresponsible batting, particularly from Brian Lara and Carl Hooper.

"I am disappointed that the others didn't give him (Campbell) enough support," said West Indies skipper Courtney Walsh.

"Most of them got out to soft dismissals just when we looked like picking up the momentum."

Lara and Hooper went into the final day carrying the West Indies' hopes of salvaging a draw.

Lara and then Hooper fell to shots unbecoming to batsmen of their stature. Lara (44) chased the first ball he faced from medium paceman Paul Reiffel and presented Mark Waugh with a sharp chance at second slip.

With the lunch break minutes away, Hooper swept part-time spinner Bevan and top-edged a catch to wicketkeeper Ian Healy.

Hooper managed just 23 runs to go with his first innings century.

Healy was named man-of-the-match for his contributions of a career-best unbeaten 161 and 45 not out, along with four catches.

"You have to give credit where credit is due: Healy played a blinder," said Walsh. "His (first) innings changed the course of the match."

From 163 for three at lunch, the West Indies lost three more wickets in the post-lunch session — Shivnarine Chanderpaul (14), Jimmy Adams (2) and Courtney Browne (20) as they sought to push the pace along.

"We came to score the rounds. We wanted to approach it positively," Walsh said.

Campbell was the man ninth out — trapped lbw by Bevan for 113 — as Bevan and McGrath wrapped up the tail.

Campbell, playing his 12th Test, reached 1,000 Test runs when he passed 97. He hit just nine boundaries off 327 balls.

It was not surprising the tourists fell short of their target.

Only Australia (404/3 in England in 1948) and India (406/4 in the West Indies in 1976) have made 400 in the fourth innings of a Test match to win.

"These Australians came out and played good, tight cricket," Walsh said. "Once they got a good first innings lead, they didn't give us a look-in from there."

West Indies fast bowler Kenny Benjamin could be a doubtful starter for the second Test, which begins in Sydney on Friday. Benjamin has a nig-gling knee injury.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard on the fifth and final day of the first Test between Australia and West Indies at the Gabba on Tuesday:

AUSTRALIA: First innings 479 (Ian Healy 161 not out)

WEST INDIES: First innings 277 (Carl Hooper 102)

AUSTRALIA: Second innings 217 for six declared

WEST INDIES: Second innings (overnight 89 for one)

Campbell lbw b Bevan 113
Samuels c Taylor b Warne 29
Lara c M Waugh b Reiffel 44
Hooper c Healy b Bevan 23
Chanderpaul b McGrath 14
Adams lbw b Warne 2
Browne c Healy b McGrath 20
Bishop c Ponting b Bevan 24
Ambrose c Warne b McGrath 7
Benjamin lbw b McGrath 1
Walsh not out 1
Extras (nb-7, b-8, lb-3) 18
Total, (106.5 overs) 296
Fall of wickets: 1-54, 2-118, 3-154, 4-187, 5-202, 6-241, 7-281, 8-293, 9-293.

Bowling O M R W
McGrath 29.5 12 60 4
Kasprowicz 13 2 29 0
Reiffel 9 0 58 1
Warne 41 16 92 2
Bevan 14 3 46 3

Result: Australia won by 123 runs.

Man of the match: Ian Healy (Australia).

The second Test will be played in Sydney, starting on Friday.

The third Test will be played in Melbourne between December 26-30, followed by the fourth Test in Adelaide between January 25-29 and the fifth Test in Perth between February 1-5.



HEALY... m-o-m

Australia scored 479 and 217 for six declared, while the West Indies scored 277 in their first innings.

The win gave Australia back to back successes against the West Indies following their 100-run victory in Kingston, Jamaica, 18 months ago. That victory saw the Australians win the series 2-1.

Fast bowler Glenn McGrath led the victory charge with four for 60 and was well supported by left-arm spinner Michael Bevan, who returned career-best figures of three for 45.

"Winning the first Test of a series is always a bonus," said Australian captain Mark Taylor. "The first Test is always the vital one and I was very happy the way the guys hung in there over the whole five days."

"If we can keep the same commitment we will be hard to beat."

Leg spinner Shane Warne took two for 92 in 41 over to go with his two for 88 in the first innings in a satisfactory return to the test arena after injury.

"He is getting his way into Test cricket," Taylor said. "It is not easy to come back after 10 months."

While Campbell stonewalled for 407 minutes, his teammates

evading taxes on her income with the kind of refuse-to-lose pride that beats in the hearts of the greatest champions.

"It's been a really long, long year," she said.

As she did last year, Graf won all three Grand Slam events she played. She finished with a 54-4 match record, seven tournament titles and prize money of more than 2.6 million dollars.

"In a way I'm glad it's done," Graf said after her 6-3, 4-6, 6-0, 4-6 and 6-0 victory over Hingis for a fifth tour final championship title. "In another way, in terms of what I've done in tennis this year, I think I topped last year."

It was so much more difficult physically to do it," added Graf, who struggled through foot, knee and back injuries to finish the season ranked first for the fourth year in a row.

"From that perspective I really outdid myself."

When her father Peter was finally freed from prison on bail 11 days ago in Germany, Graf said she wished she could leave immediately for a reunion.

But there was unfinished business — defending her status in New York as queen of tennis. Victory had to be all the sweeter as Graf ended Jana Novotna's streak of three straight tournament titles in the semifinals and then stopped the charge of rising star Hingis.

Graf gave the fearless Hingis her due after their near three-hour battle.

"As fast as she is going, she's

definitely the one to look out for no question," Graf said of Hingis, who began the year ranked 16th and finished number four.

"The way she's been playing without being afraid, with the freshness, I definitely see her as the one."

Hingis did not qualify last year for the elite, 16-player field but was honoured here as most impressive newcomer.

"Last year I was watching the other players and now I reached the finals so it was like a little dream came true," said Hingis, whose bigger dreams involve Grand Slams.

Graf is not about to yield to anyone, but the German sees something special in Hingis.

The swimmers nominated were Penelope Heyns of South Africa, the 100 and 200 metres breaststroke gold medalist Alexander Popov of Russia, 50 and 100 metres freestyle winner triple gold medalist Michelle Smith of Ireland, 400 freestyle 200 and 400 individual medley and quadruple gold medalist Amy Van Dyken of the United States 50 freestyle, 100 butterfly and 4x100 freestyle and medley relays.

Two Chinese were nominated, diver Fu Mingxia and gymnast Li Xiaoshuang.

Also nominated were Cuban boxer Felix Savon and Turkish weightlifter Naim Suleymanoglu.

The Jesse Owens award is presented to the athlete who best personifies excellence in athletic performance and promotes sincere cooperation and understanding among peoples of all nations.

SA seek ICC report on Ahmedabad tie

JOHANNESBURG, Nov 26: South Africa's cricket supremo Ali Bacher is asking the International Cricket Council for the referee's match report on the first Test against India, reports Reuter.

The request follows an angry comment from coach Bob Woolmer that they had been "stuffed" before the Test because of wickets and practice facilities of a type they did not want.

Bacher, managing director of the United Cricket Board of South Africa, said on Monday. "There were several aspects of the game which were unsatisfactory, but we will wait for John Reid's reports before discussing any action."

The match ended in Ahmedabad on Saturday in 64-run win for India after South Africa were skittled out for 105 on wearing wicket.

Woolmer said on Sunday that he was unhappy with the pitch and the practice facilities for his team.

"I don't mind losing, but I don't like losing having been stuffed for three weeks beforehand on wickets and practice facilities which are not conducive to what we want," he said.

Woolmer had complained before the Test that although they had won both their warm-up games with ease, the opposition was so weak his batsmen had no chance to play an innings.

Bacher said on Monday: "Facilities are a worldwide problem which require finance together with motivation from the ICC. Countries must be told that they have a responsibility to provide the best possible practice facilities."

"We requested a certain standard of facilities before the tour and it looks like these have not been forthcoming. But the match referee's report is a lot more wide-ranging now and will include comments on practice facilities."

The newly-laid wicket, which was firm and solid and had a tinge of grass on it, earned praise from the South Africans even as it disappointed the home team.

"This is what I call a sporting Test wicket," South African coach Bob Woolmer said. "It will help both the fast bowlers and batsmen at the start and gradually assist turn."

Indian captain Sachin Tendulkar, who had a close look at the pitch with coach Madan Lal, told an official of the Cricket Association of Bengal (CAB) he was disappointed at what was prepared.

Leg injuries to pace spearhead Allan Donald and bats-

man Jonty Rhodes, however, offered the South Africans little respite as they attempt to become only the third team this century to come from behind to win a three-Test series.

"Donald has a 50-50 chance of playing," Woolmer said. "Jonty's chances are even less."

Eastern province captain John Commins, a middle-order batsman who has played three Tests, joined the tourists today to stand in for Rhodes, but Cronje was still undecided whether to play him.

"We will wait till Wednesday morning to see Donald's fitness before deciding on the eleven," he said. "We don't want to take chances in this important game."

The Indians were facing selection problems of a different kind after elegant left-hander Saurav Ganguly, who missed the first Test with a hamstring injury, was declared fit to play on his home ground.

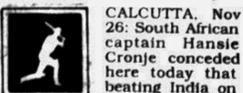
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SACHIN TENDULKAR team would not lie down when the second Test opens at the Eden Gardens on Wednesday.

"Beating India in India is not easy, it ranks among the most difficult things to do," Cronje said of his rivals' impressive record of 13 wins in their last 17 home Tests since 1989.

"But we have shown a lot of character in the past and I am confident the boys will not go down without a fight."

Cronje, who slammed the wicket, crowd behaviour and lack of practice facilities at Ahmedabad, appeared relieved at the conditions at the 100,000 seater Eden Gardens.

"Ahmedabad was a waste of time, but it is a privilege to play at the Eden Gardens," he said. "This is one of the five best grounds in the world."

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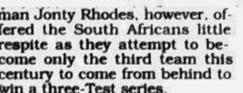
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