

Aussies to tour India in Feb

MUMBAI, Aug 29: Australia's cricketers are scheduled to arrive in India on February 21, 1998 to play three Tests against the home team and participate in the one-day triangular series with the hosts and Zimbabwe. reports PTI.

The tourists would play three Tests and three three-day games between February 24 and March 28 before going into the three-nation one-day tournament which is to commence on April 2, according to the acting secretary of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) J Y Lele.

The first five matches of the triangular tournament are scheduled for April 2, 4, 7, 9 and 12 — the dates suggested by the Australian Cricket Board (ACB) for a bilateral series.

The tournament would be extended by a few days following confirmation from Zimbabwe, Lele said. The Australians had also agreed for the triangular series.

The venue of all the matches would be decided at the September 9 meeting of the special BCCI committee formed under the chairmanship of BCCI president Raj Singh Dungarpur and convened at New Delhi.

The three Tests would be held from Mar 5-9, Mar 12-16 and Mar 24-28. The three-day games would be held from Feb 24-26, Feb 28-Mar 2 and Mar 19-21. The tourists would also play a one-day practice games on March 31 prior to the triangular series.

Tennis Hall of Fame

Connors atop the nominees' list

NEWPORT, Rhode Island, Aug 29: Jimmy Connors, who was ranked in the world's top 10 for 16 consecutive years, heads the list of nominees for the International Tennis Hall of Fame, reports AP.

The 1998 ballot was announced Thursday by Tony Trabert, chairman of the Hall of Fame Enshrinee Nominating Committee.

Also on the ballot, which is voted on by members of the international tennis media, are Francoise Durr of France, Ken McGregor of Australia and American Nancy Richey. Herman David is included on the International Masters Panel ballot, which honors individuals for outstanding contributions to the sport.

Connors, from Belleville, Illinois, was ranked No. 1 in the world for 160 consecutive weeks. In 1973, he won three of the four Grand Slam tournaments, and in one stretch, 1974-78, reached the US Open singles final in five consecutive years.

He is the only player to win the US Open singles on all three surfaces — grass (1974), clay (1976) and hardcourt (1978, 82, 83) — and teamed with Hall of Famer Ilie Nastase to win the US Open doubles in 1975.

Durr, born in Algiers, is the last French woman to win her country's national singles championship, winning the title in 1967. She also won 11 doubles crowns at the majors.

McGregor was an integral member of the 1950 Australian Davis Cup team that ended the United States' four-year possession of the Cup. He teamed with countryman Frank Sedgeman to complete the only male Grand Slam in doubles in 1951, and the duo won three of the four majors the following year.

McGregor also won the Australian singles in 1952, defeating Sedgeman in the final.

Richey, from San Angelo, Texas, won a record six consecutive US Clay Court Championships and the first French Open women's singles in 1968. She also won an Australian singles title on grass in 1967 and paired with Hall of Famer Maria Bueno for doubles titles at Wimbledon and the US Championships in 1966.

Richey and her brother, Cliff, hold the distinction of being the only brother-sister combination to hold the No. 1 US ranking in singles.

McGregor was an advocate of open tennis during his 15-year tenure as chairman of the All-England Club. He was a teammate of Hall of Famers Fred Perry and Bunny Austin on the British Davis Cup team in 1932 and was the team's non-playing captain from 1953-58.

No alternative, but Atherton



Aussies.

England's hierarchy — especially chairman of selectors David Graveney, coach David Lloyd and selector Mike Gatting — have led the calls for the Lancashire opener to stay on.

In June, at Lord's, he passed Peter May's previous record tally of 41 Tests as England captain — but he was defeated by the 3-2 series defeat by the Aussies.

But he will not skipper England's one-day international side in a pre-Christmas tournament in Sharjah or in the one-day series against the West Indies which follows the Test matches.

Atherton, who has been likened — admiringly — to a cockroach because of his qualities of stubbornness and endurance, has spent five days pondering his future since Saturday's victory against Australia at The Oval.

He had made it known during the sixth Test that he is worried about his batting form — he made just 257 runs at an average of 23 against the

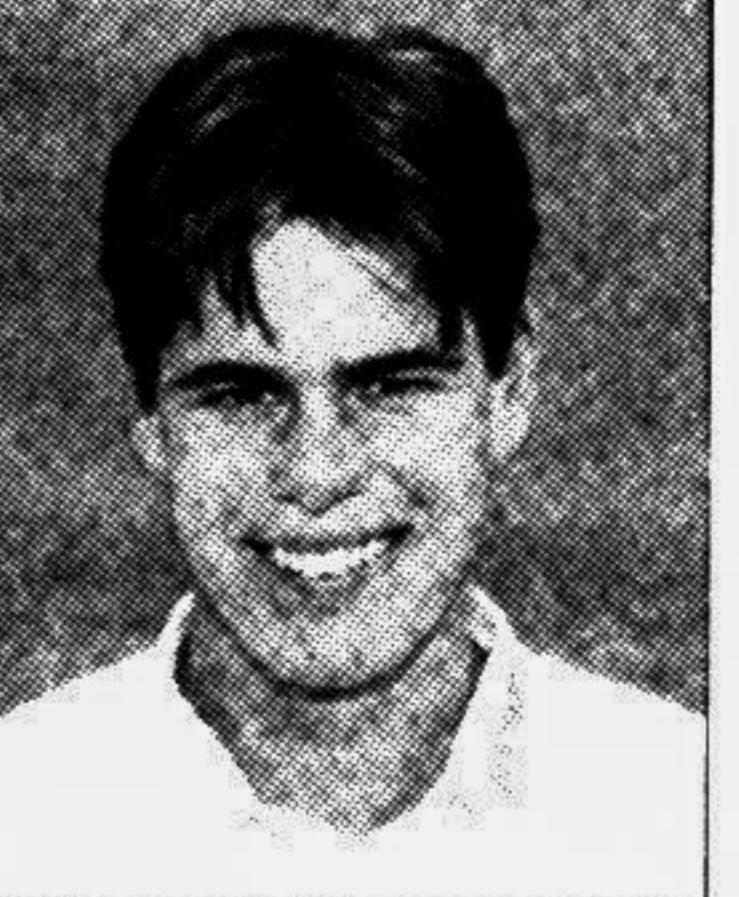
MIKE ATHERTON

tour of their clash with Northamptonshire at Northampton.

The paceman bowled unchanged for 22 overs, and Northamptonshire were dismissed for 144.

Stewart Hutton then made an unbeaten 46, and Durham moved to 118 for two.

Winter tour hopeful Steve



STEVE GATTING

Gallian knocked two stumps out in frustration after being bowled by Paul Hutchison on the second day of the Roses match at Old Trafford in the English country championship.

He was called back to explain his destructive gesture by umpires Nigel Plews and Alan Whited and appeared to apologise.

Gallian's controversial departure capped a poor day for Lancashire, as Yorkshire declared on 419 for nine before restricting their hosts to 135 for three.

Melvyn Betts claimed nine for 64 to help Durham take con-

Bangkok brushes off bad press

BANGKOK, Aug 29: The embattled Thai organisers of the 1998 Asian Games promised Friday that preparations to host Asia's premier sports event were on track and invited critics to come see for themselves, reports AP.

In a media statement aimed at the Olympic Council of Asia, which has issued veiled threats the Games might be withdrawn from Thailand, the Bangkok Asian Games Organising Committee expressed surprise at the criticism.

The Bangkok organisers said they were "very concerned" that Sheikh Ahmad al-Fahad al-Sabah of Kuwait, president of the council, had been "misinformed concerning the state of progress" of work done in Thailand and invited him to make an inspection.

The organisers noted council officials had been checking progress monthly and "had never expressed any dissatisfaction, either verbally or in writing."

The Olympic Council of Asia retains ultimate authority over the competition, scheduled to be held in Bangkok in December 1998.

Summer badminton Sports Reporter

National champion Russell Sumon and Mahbubur Rab of Biman moved into the men's singles final of the Rupali Insurance summer badminton tournament yesterday.

Sumon, the top seed, edged past his teammate Sanwar Ahmed 15-11, 15-9 while Mahbub beat another Biman shuttler Rashed 15-9, 15-11 at the wooden floor gymnasium.

Meanwhile, the women's singles finalists were also decided.

In the first semifinal, Kanika Rani Adhikari of Biman came from behind to beat her teammate Noori 8-11, 11-0, 11-3 while Elina Bima saw off Sharmin Ahmed Momo 12-11, 11-1.

David was an advocate of open tennis during his 15-year tenure as chairman of the All-England Club. He was a teammate of Hall of Famers Fred Perry and Bunny Austin on the British Davis Cup team in 1932 and was the team's non-playing captain from 1953-58.

Kanika Rani Adhikari of Biman makes a backhand return against her teammate Noori during yesterday's women's singles semifinals of the Rupali Insurance summer badminton tournament.

Sport

Prasad, Kumble omitted

BOMBAY, Aug 29: India have dropped bowlers Venkatesh Prasad and Anil Kumble from the squad for the forthcoming tour of Canada and Pakistan, officials said today, reports Reuters.

Medium pacer Prasad is being rested on medical advice as he is suffering from pain in his bowling arm, Board for Control of Cricket in India (BCCI) secretary JY Lele said.

Kumble was also asked to take rest and all-rounder Ajay Jadeja would be vice-captain in his place.

Wicketkeeper Saba Karim will make a comeback, at the expense of Nayan Mongia, while opening batsman Navjot Sidhu has also been left out.

The 14-man squad has two new faces — medium-pacer Harvinder Singh of northern Punjab state and Hrishikesh Kanitkar, a left-handed all-rounder from western Maharashtra state.

The team leaves New Delhi on September 10 and will play five one-day matches against Pakistan in Toronto for the Sahara Cup on September 13, 14, 17, 20 and 21.

After playing in Canada, the team will travel to Pakistan for another three matches as part of Pakistan's Golden Jubilee of Independence celebrations.

The games are scheduled for Lahore on September 28, Hyderabad on September 30 and Karachi on October 2.

SQUAD

Sachin Tendulkar (captain), Ajay Jadeja, Mohammad Azharuddin, Rahul Dravid, Ravin Ganguly, Vinod Kambla, Robin Singh, Saba Karim, Debadish Mohanty, Abey Kuruvilla, Harvinder Singh, Nilesh Kulkarni, Rajesh Chauhan, Hrishikesh Kanitkar.

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An AFP file photo shows Diego Maradona reacting to photographers who were trying to take snaps of the Argentine football star having breakfast at a Beijing hotel.

Diego does it again!

Maradona had returned to the field on Sunday after months of opting not to play because he said he lacked motivation.

Maradona's manager Guillermo Coppola expressed astonishment at the failed drug test, saying the team had tested Maradona Sunday morning.

AFA spokesman Washington Rivera said the test was conducted after