

Krajicek wants clear answers

SYDNEY, Jan 4: Former Wimbledon champion Richard Krajicek has questioned the International Tennis Federation's handling of the Petr Korda drug case and says players deserve more details on the incident, reports AP.

Korda is free to defend his Australian Open crown this month despite testing positive to the banned steroid Nandrolone at Wimbledon in July.

Most major sports, under International Olympic Committee guidelines, ban first-time steroid offenders for two years. The ITF has yet to toe the IOC line but has provision for a maximum one-year suspension.

The ITF opted for its minimum penalty in sentencing Korda, accepting the player's claim that he took the drug unknowingly.

The 30-year-old Czech was stripped of 1999 rankings points and \$4,500 prize money he earned at Wimbledon.

Krajicek said Monday the ITF needed to fully explain its lenient stance.

"Now is the time for the players to start asking questions about what really happened," the world No. 10 said after a practice session at White City, venue for next week's Adidas International.

"It's a very sensitive issue to talk about but I don't understand it. If he tested positive maybe he must have done it but maybe there must be another side to the story.

"Either you test positive or you don't and people should know exactly what went on."

Korda told London's Times newspaper last month that he had planned to retire but will continue playing because of the "black mark" on his name.

Krajicek admitted it would be hard for Korda to live the positive test down.

"If the ITF really did make some kind of mistake with the test it's very bad for Petr because now he's got the name and it's going to be very tough to shake it," Krajicek said.

"I was in a bit of a zone, the eyes were spinning and it was just all happening so I wasn't thinking too much other than hitting through the line," Slater said.

Slater said: "It was an innings I am proud of. It was important someone did it for the team." England's players declined to comment on the decision but were clearly frustrated by the outcome.

But with Australia falling to 110-6 he stepped on the gas, reaching his 11th Test hundred, and seventh against England.

Slater is naturally exuberant, but exceeded even his own levels of joy when he reached three figures, running towards the dressingroom with both arms aloft before making his customary kiss on the Australian badge on his batting helmet.

Slater's close shave

SYDNEY, Jan 4 (Reuters/AP/Internet): Michael Slater, Australia's century saviour on the third day of the final Ashes Test against England, thought he had been run out for 35.

Slater, who had drove to mid-on and came back for a second run with Australia on 59 for two, appeared to be short of his ground after a direct throw from Dean Headley.

"I knew it was close — all direct hits are close — and there's no doubt I got the benefit of the camera angles, but the umpire can only make a judgement on what he sees," the opener said.

"I think if you're going to have the third umpire then you should get the cameras in place so it's conclusive.

"If there was a camera at the other side of the ground square on, there's no doubt you'd know one way or the other."

Slater had removed his gloves and walked to the non-strikers' end in the direction of the pavilion as the English players celebrated around him.

But he was saved when the third umpire Simon Taufel gave him the benefit of the doubt because England's Peter Such had obscured the television replay.

Slater took a while to calm down and the close call made him cautious.

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While some grounds, such as Lord's, have installed cameras along the batting creases, Sydney relies on the vision shot by the most television broadcaster.

A spokesman for Lord's said the technology had cost about US \$150,000 but could be moved to other venues.

It was the second third umpire decision to go against England at a crucial time in the series. The tourists lodged an official complaint against TV umpire Paul Angle after he gave Mike Atherton out to a dubious catch in the third Test at Adelaide.

World No 1 Davenport got the Americans off to a flying start as she overwhelmed Asa Carlsson 6-2, 6-0 in 53 minutes. Jonas Bjorkman then levelled the tie with a 6-2, 6-4 win over Gambill, and the Swedes clinched the tie with a 7-6 (7-2), 6-4 triumph in the mixed doubles.

Carlsson had an air of defiance about her as she tackled Davenport. She hit out well in the rallies, but once she was broken to love in the third game there was never any doubt about the eventual outcome.

Although Davenport showed signs of rust after a lengthy end-of-season break, her greater power and fewer errors meant she was never troubled.

"You never know what to expect after six or seven weeks without a match, but I felt I played well in the singles," said Davenport. "The mixed (doubles) was a little bit awkward, but we can build on it."

Gambill was unhappy at some of the officiating, complaining that one call in the tiebreak "was the worst call I've ever seen." But there was another problem, and the real reason the Americans lost the match.

"In the second set I double-faulted three times in one game, and you can't do that and win a match," he said.

That gave the Swedes a break for 5-4, and Bjorkman served out for the match. It was the first time Bjorkman had played mixed doubles, but he spent some time practicing and discussing tactics with Carlsson, and it paid off.

Their plan was for Bjorkman to crouch low at the net every time Carlsson served and to leap up and knock off a winning volley. He missed a few, but enough of his efforts found their mark.

His presence at the net also bothered the Americans.

"Jonas was definitely key at the net," said Gambill. "He was in the middle of the court and it was really hard knowing where to hit the return."

The only cloud on Bjorkman's horizon is a problem with his right hamstring.

"It didn't help to lay down every time Asa served," he admitted. "It's been very tight because I've had the flu and didn't play for a week. I just need to loosen it up, but I'm quite sore at the moment. Hopefully with good treatment it will get better."

In matches Tuesday, defending champions Slovak Republic faces Switzerland and South Africa plays France.

The round-robin even consists of two groups, and each team plays three times to determine who will contest Saturday's final. Group A consists of Spain, South Africa, Australia and France while Group B is made up of the United States, Slovak Republic, Sweden and Switzerland.

Hewitt, Enqvist advance

ADELAIDE, Jan 4: Defending champion Lleyton Hewitt of Australia upset Nicolas Kiefer of Germany and second seed Thomas Enqvist overcame early nerves, to beat Mark Woodforde in first-round matches at the Australian men's hardcourt tennis championships Monday, reports AP.

Hewitt beat the seventh-seeded Kiefer 7-5, 6-4, while Enqvist overcame a sleepy start to rebound for a 0-6, 6-4, 6-4 win over two-time Adelaide champion Woodforde.

Enqvist said he felt the early pressure playing against the hometown hero who had defeated him in their past three meetings.

"It was my first match for a while. I was really excited to be back playing. I felt a little nervous," Enqvist said.

Enqvist said he was looking to recapture his form from the first half of last year after spending three months late last year off the circuit with a foot injury.

In earlier matches, Australians Jason Stoltenberg, Scott Draper and Michael Tubbott won their first-round matches.

As the temperature soared to over 100F at Memorial Drive, fourth-seeded Stoltenberg won comfortably over French teenager Arnaud Di Pasquale 6-1, 6-4.

Fresh from a three-month layoff to heal a nagging knee injury, Draper made a shaky start against Justin Gimelstob but eventually defeated the American 3-6, 7-6 (8-6), 6-3. Wildcard recipient Tubbott beat Canadian Sebastian Laureau 6-3, 3-6, 6-1.

Former French Open winner Brazilian Gustavo Kuerten joined the Aussie trio in the second round after beating Frenchman Jerome Golmard 7-5, 6-1.

The heat wave is forecast to continue Tuesday when US Open champion and top seed Pat Rafter makes his first singles appearance in two months against Japanese qualifier Takao Suzuki.

Malone wants to play elsewhere

LOS ANGELES, Jan 4: After 13 outstanding years with the Utah Jazz, Karl Malone has decided it's time to play elsewhere, reports AP.

Swedes shock Americans

PERTH, Jan 4: Sweden pulled off a surprise victory over the second-seeded United States team of Lindsay Davenport and Jan-Michael Gambill at the Hopman Cup tournament Monday, reports AP.

World No 1 Davenport got the Americans off to a flying start as she overwhelmed Asa Carlsson 6-2, 6-0 in 53 minutes. Jonas Bjorkman then levelled the tie with a 6-2, 6-4 win over Gambill, and the Swedes clinched the tie with a 7-6 (7-2), 6-4 triumph in the mixed doubles.

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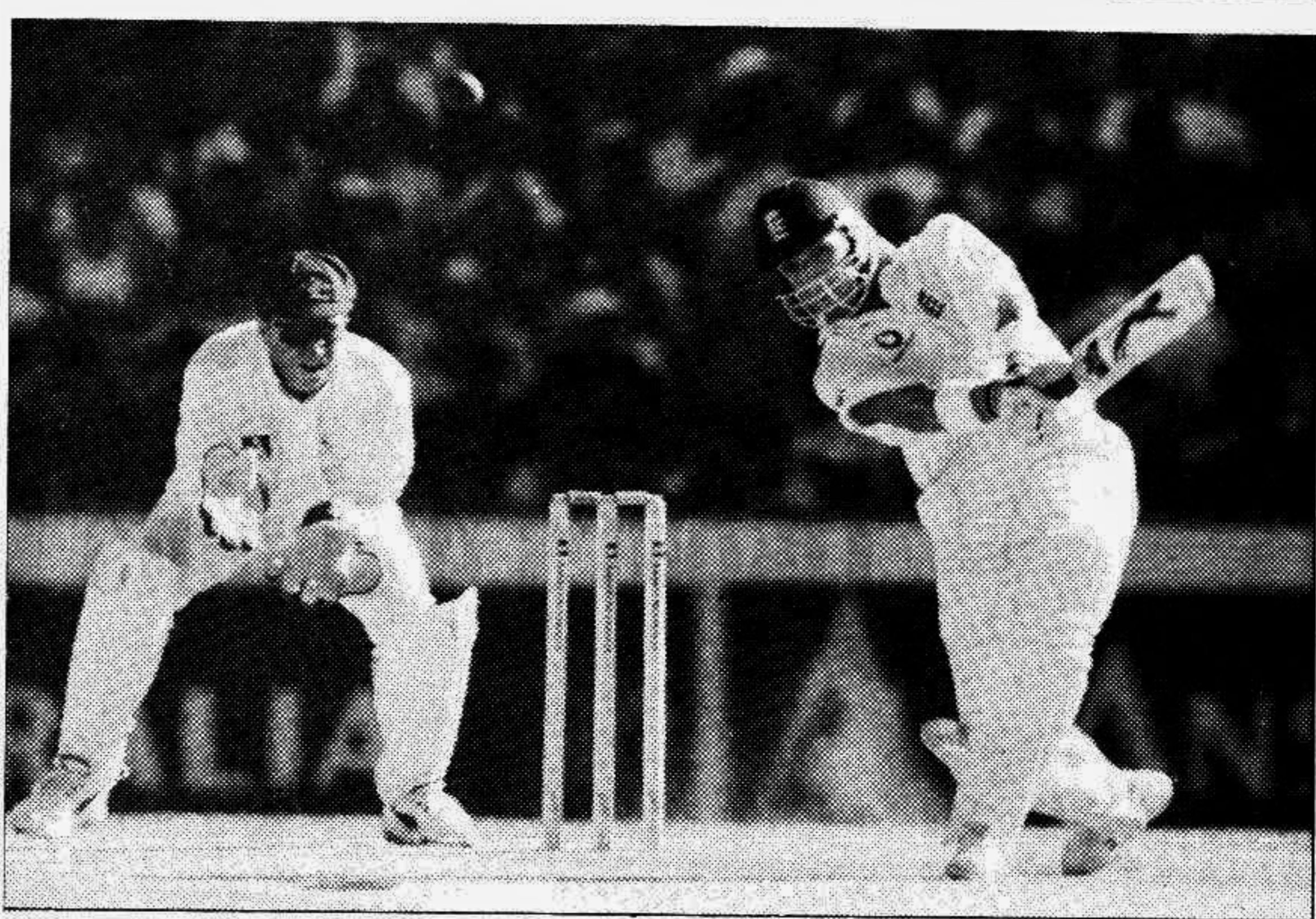
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Malone, one of the best power forwards in NBA history, said in his radio show Wednesday he no longer wants to play for the Jazz.

An 11-time All-Star who led Utah to the NBA finals each of the last two seasons, Malone has one year remaining on his contract with the Jazz.



England skipper Alec Stewart drives leg-spinner Stuart MacGill in his caviller 42. —AFP photo

England have a chance

SYDNEY, Jan 4 (AP/Reuters): Michael Slater made England suffer after receiving a dubious run out first innings 322.

Slater thumped 123 of Australia's second innings 184, getting 87 more than replays suggested he deserved, to set England a Sydney Cricket Ground record fourth innings score of 287 to win the match.

At stumps on Day Three England had made a positive start with 104 runs, but lost two wickets.

Shane Warne had Mark Butcher stumped for 27 with a wrong 'un and Stuart MacGill beat an advancing Alec Stewart (42) to have him stumped as well. Nasser Hussain had 17 and Mark Ramprakash was 14 at the close.

The record winning last innings total at the SCG is 276, set 100 years ago by Australia against England, and the pitch is taking considerable turn.

"We're confident we've got the bowlers to get these eight wickets, we're in the box seat," said Slater.

England's bowlers, led by off-spinner Peter Such with 58, performed superbly but the team lacked a vital piece of luck as it battled to overcome a 102-run first innings deficit to level the series 2-2.

England's frustrations and fading chances, were reflected in Slater's share of Australia's tally.

He scored 66.65 per cent of the team's runs, the second best share by any batsman in the game's 1,438 test matches. Australian Charles Bannerman got 165 of Australia's 245 in the first-ever test in 1,877 at 67.34 per cent.

Slater said, it was another good day from an English team which lost two of the first three

Tests and was saved only by the rain in the other before winning in Melbourne.

Australia resumed at 13-0 after dismissing England for 220 on Sunday in reply to their first innings 322.

Captain Mark Taylor was first out Monday for two, prodding forward and edging an away cutter from Darren Gough low to Alec Stewart at first slip.

Justin Langer made just one before he was second man down at 25, playing across the crease to a ball from Headley which pitched on leg and held its line to get him bowled.

Slater and Mark Waugh (24) added 39 before Waugh, a century scorer in the first innings went to another stunning catch behind square leg from Mark Ramprakash off Headley.

Darren Lehmann had his fourth failure since returning to the team when he became Such's first victim, pushing a hard chance to John Crawley at silly point. Ian Healy fell for five to the Such-Crawley combination while Headley bowled the best ball of the match to send back an injured Steve Waugh for eight.

Waugh, struggling with a hamstring strain but batting without the help of a runner, had his off stump rocked back by a Headley leg-cutter.

Schett sails

AUCKLAND, Jan 4: Austrian Barbara Schett did something Monday she hasn't been able to do in four previous attempts — win a first-round match at the Auckland Women's Classic tennis tournament, reports AP.

Playing with confidence and keeping her opponent on the defensive, Schett, the fourth seed, swept past struggling German Elena Wagner 6-1, 6-0.

In other matches Monday, second seed Silvia Farina of Italy beat Andrea Glass of Germany 6-4, 7-5 and third-seeded Julie Halard-Decugis of France beat Jana Nedjedly of Canada 6-3, 6-3.

Slater gave Headley four wickets when he sliced a thin edge through to wicketkeeper Warren Hegg. His century included 11 fours and three sixes, all off Such, and featured some stunning drives.

England made a bright start to their run chase with Stewart and Butcher putting on 57 before Warne got a wicket with his sixth ball of the innings, luring Butcher down the track. Stewart played an attacking innings but his approach led to his downfall.

SCOREBOARD

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Donald rattles Windies

CAPE TOWN, Jan 4: A lightning fast opening spell by Allan Donald tightened South Africa's grip on the fourth Test against West Indies at Newlands on Sunday, reports Reuters.

Donald seized three for 13 in five overs — including the prized-wicket of Brian Lara — and first-change pace bowler David Terbrugge also took a wicket as West Indies slumped to 34 for four.

The touring team, rallied by an unbeaten 53 from Carl Hooper, were 89 for four at the close in reply to South Africa's first innings of 406 for eight declared.

Donald was forced to withdraw at the end of his fifth over with a hamstring strain in his left leg but by then he had done the damage against a West Indian side who had already spent 10 hours toiling in the field.

With his fourth ball, Donald hustled one through. Junior Murray before he had scored, finding an inside edge which wicketkeeper Mark Boucher took well diving to his left.

In Donald's fourth over he again appeared to have simply too much pace for Philo Wallace, who got an edge which flew to first slip Darryl Cullinan, the opener made eight.

Donald reserved his wildest celebrations for his next over when he dismissed Lara for four.

The West Indian captain, who once replaced Donald as Werwickshire's overseas player, had got off the mark with a pulled four off the fast bowler.

But after facing just five balls, Lara leapt backwards to play a defensive shot against Donald, disturbing his stumps with his right heel as he came down to be out hit wicket.

Shivnarine Chanderpaul attempted to repair the damage with a watchful stay, but after spending almost an hour and a half making six, he aimed a lofted drive at Terbrugge and Jonny Rhodes leapt to hold onto the catch at short extra cover.

Hooper responded to the crisis in aggressive fashion racing to his half-century at virtually a run-a-ball as he shared an

eight to his overnight score.

Falling for 110, while Darryl Cullinan — 122 not out overnight — posted his Test-best 168 before he became the second of Nixon McLean's two victims.

Curtly Ambrose was the pick of the West Indian bowlers, bowling economically for little

reward before a hamstring strain forced him to withdraw shortly after lunch.

South Africa already have a winning 3-0 lead in the series.

SCOREBOARD

South Africa: First innings

Kirsten c Jacobs b Ambrose 42
Gibbs c Wallace b Dillon 40
Kallis c Jacobs b Gibson 110
Cullinan c Jacobs b McLean 168
Cronje c Jacobs b McLean 40
Rhodes b Hooper 34
Pollock c Lara b Dillon 15
Boucher not out 19
Donald c Wallace b Dillon 0
Terbrugge not out 24
Extras: (lb-3, w-1, nb-20) 24
Total: (for eight wks dec) 406
Fall of wickets: 1-0; 2-74; 3-309; 4-312; 5-376; 6-380; 7-397; 8-397.

Did not bat: P Adams.

Bowler: O M R W
Ambrose 24.1 7 49 1
McLean 25.5 7 76 2
Gibson 30 4 92 1
Dillon 33.5 6 93 3
Hooper 27 6 60 1
Chanderpaul 6 0 27 0

WEST INDIES: First innings

Wallace c Cullinan b Donald 8
Murray c Boucher b Donald 0
Chanderpaul c Rhodes b Terbrugge 6
Lara hit wkt b Donald 4
Hooper not out 53
Ganga not out 16
Extras: (lb-2) 2
Total: (for four wks) 89
Fall of wickets: 1-1; 2-10; 3-14; 4-34.

To bat: R Jacobs, O Gibson, N McLean, M Dillon, C Ambrose.

Bowler: (to date) O M R W
Donald 5 0 13 3
Pollock 10 6 16 0
Terbrugge 7 3 13 1
Kallis 6 2 21 0
Adams 5 0 24 0

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