

Div I cricket

Sports Reporter

**BRIEF SCORES**  
**Lalmatia v Dhaka Wanderers**  
Venue: Bangabandhu National Stadium  
**LALMATIA:** 182 for 9 wickets in 50 overs (Shahid Iqbal 40, Raju 35; Topi 2/28, Pijush 2/37)  
**WANDERERS:** 183 for 8 wickets in 54.2 overs (Aniruddha 54, Sujon 28 not out; Aminul 2/26, Shahid Iqbal 2/29)  
**Result:** Dhaka Wanderers won by 2 wickets.  
**Bangladesh Boys v Jatrabari KC**  
Venue: Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium  
**JATRABARI:** 184 all out in 49.5 overs (Azam 53, Mushatq 37; Bablu 4/30, Appolo 2/15)  
**BANGLADESH BOYS:** 188 for 3 wickets in 33.2 overs (Masuk 98, Majid 60 not out; Polash 3/40)  
**Result:** Bangladesh Boys won by 7 wickets.

Dhaka Wanderers and Bangladesh Boys won their respective First Division Cricket League matches at different city venues yesterday.

At the Bangabandhu National Stadium, Dhaka Wanderers prevailed over Lalmatia Club by two wickets. In a low-scoring affair, Wanderers, chasing a modest Lalmatia total of 182 for nine in the stipulated 50 overs, overhauled the target for the loss of eight wickets and with four balls to spare.

Aniruddha Aich scored a patient 54 off 91 balls for the winners.

At the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium, Masuk missed what could have been a terrific century for only two runs, but played the sheet anchor role to guide the Gopibagh outfit to an easy seven-wicket win over Jatrabari KC.

Mashuk scored a breezy 98 off 93 balls as Bangladesh Boys, chasing a not-so-impressive Jatrabari total of 184, rattled up 188 for three wickets in only 33.2 overs.

Mashuk shared enterprising 149 runs for the third wicket with Majid before becoming the third victim of Polash was the lone successful Jatrabari bowler who finished with three for 40 runs. Majid remained unbeaten on 67 off 87 balls.

MacGill in

A team

SYDNEY, Dec 21: Discarded Test spinner Stuart MacGill has been included in the Australian A side to play Pakistan in two limited-over matches in January, reports Reuters.

MacGill, who took 59 wickets in 12 tests for Australia before losing his spot to Shane Warne, was included in a 12-man squad chosen today.

Pakistan will play Australia A in Perth on January 2 then in Adelaide two days later as part of their preparations for the upcoming triangular limited-over series with Australia and India.

SQUAD

Shane Lee (captain), Matthew Hayden, David Fitzgerald, Brad Hodge, Andrew Symonds, Ian Harvey, Daniel Marsh, Brad Haddin, Andy Bichel, Paul Wilson, Brad Williams, Stuart MacGill.

Laver honoured

MELBOURNE, Dec 21: The Centre Court at Melbourne Park, the venue for the Australian Open, has been renamed in honour of Rod Laver, Australia's greatest tennis player, reports Reuters.

Australian tennis officials said the Centre Court would now be known as the Rod Laver Arena after the only player to have won all four Grand Slam titles in a single year.

"I am delighted to accept this wonderful honour," Laver said. "This is a crowning achievement to my tennis career."

The decision by Australian tennis officials follows the trend set by organisers of the French and U.S. Opens who have already named their show courts after former champions with Roland Garros honouring Suzanne Lenglen and Flushing Meadow recognising the achievements of Arthur Ashe.

WTA increases

prize money

STAMFORD, Connecticut, Dec 21: Prize money for the Sanex WTA Tour will be increased by more than 3 million dollars for the 2000 season, organisers announced, reports Reuters.

Players will be competing for more than 47 million dollars in 62 tournaments.

Players on the Sanex WTA Tour have the opportunity to earn more prize money than female athletes in any other sport," said tour CEO Bart McGuire.

"Women's tennis is enjoying one of the greatest times in its history in terms of the level of competition and worldwide popularity, which is evidenced by our record attendance levels and rising television ratings."

Prize money at Tier I events will rise 80,000 to 1,080,000 dollars in 2000. Tier II events will have an increase of 35,000 to 535,000 dollars. The Newsweek Champions Cup in Indian Wells, California, increased 600,000 dollars from 1999 to 2 million dollars.

Barisal thrive

From page 13

Their second innings with an intention of enforcing a draw. For Rajshahi, nothing went right on the second day, where their bowlers came under terrific assault from the marauding Barisal duo. Only slow left-arm Mustafizur Rana earned some respect to finish with four for 36 in his 9.5 overs.



An AFP file photo of Brazilian and European-player-of-the-year Rivaldo celebrating with teammate Roberto Carlos during the 1998 World Cup.

Rivaldo remembers

daddy

PARIS, Dec 21: Long snubbed by Brazilian fans and journalists, Rivaldo says he owes his European player-of-the-year award to his late father — the man he says really believed in him, reports Reuters.

"All the merit in my success goes to him," he told France Football in an interview today.

"He encouraged me to forge ahead in this way, convinced

that I would make it when others doubted me."

"That is why I dedicate this Golden Ball to him," he added.

The second Brazilian to be handed the trophy after Ronaldo two years ago, Rivaldo received 219 points from a jury of 51 journalists, beating Manchester United and England midfielder David Beckham by 65 points.

"He was my great rival and a great player who would have deserved to win. He proved it by winning four titles with Manchester United," he said.

"But the many goals I scored made the difference. Beckham has won all the major trophies this season and his passing is great, but he scores fewer goals than me."

Coveted by most of Europe's wealthiest teams, Rivaldo, who turned down an offer to play for Manchester United in the summer, said he wished to stay with Barcelona until the end of his contract in 2003.

"I'm very flattered that so many prestigious teams have expressed an interest in me, but I feel settled in Barcelona and I mean to honour my contract which ends in 2003," he said.

Negotiations are under way between Barcelona officials and Rivaldo's agent Jose Maria Minguella over his wages, but the Brazilian said he would make no comment until the end of the season.

Despite some misunderstandings with Brazilian crowds and with former Brazilian manager Mario Zagallo, who refused to select him for a year after he was deemed responsible for the 4-3 loss to Nigeria in the 1996 Olympics semifinals, Rivaldo said the award brought with it no feeling of revenge.

"It's just a great happiness," he said. "It is true that I have not always been popular and I have suffered from that but things have changed for the better."

"Now I get good write-ups from the Brazilian press. Since we won the Copa America, journalists have changed their opinions," he added.

Asked why he was misunderstood in his own country, he said: "I don't come from Rio or Sao Paulo but from Recife and it hampered me for a long time. It is something that matters back home," he said.

The appointment of Wanderley Luxemburgo as Brazil's manager after the 1998 World Cup in France has further changed matters for Rivaldo.

"He is the man who brought me up as a player. He's a great technician, one of the best in the world."

"He knows me perfectly, he trusts me and that helps a lot," he added.

TOP CONTENDERS

PARIS, Dec 21 (Reuters): Top 10 standings in the European player-of-the-year poll released by soccer weekly France Football yesterday:

Pos	Player	Country/Club(s)	Points
1.	Rivaldo	Brazil/Barcelona	219
2.	David Beckham	England/Manchester United	154
3.	Andriy Shevchenko	Ukraine/Dynamo Kiev and AC Milan	64
4.	Gabriel Batistuta	Argentina/Fiorentina	48
5.	Luis Figo	Portugal/Barcelona	38
6.	Roy Keane	Ireland/Manchester United	36
7.	Christian Vieri	Italy/Lazio and Inter Milan	33
8.	Sebastian Veron	Argentina/Parma and Lazio	30
9.	Raul Gonzalez	Spain/Real Madrid	27
10.	Lothar Matthaeus	Germany/Bayern Munich	16

Kaiser hopes for a

double

COLOGNE, Germany, Dec 21: Bayern Munich president Franz Beckenbauer said he expects a German League and Cup double from his team this season on the run-up to Wednesday's Cup quarterfinal against Mainz 05, reports AFP.

Bayern were runners-up in the Cup last season, beaten by Werder Bremen a few weeks after their confidence was crushed by Manchester United in the final of the Champions League. A victory over the second division side would help make up for that trauma.

"I expect us to win the Bundesliga title, the German Cup and to reach the final of the Champions League," the Kaiser told Monday's Abendzeitung newspaper.

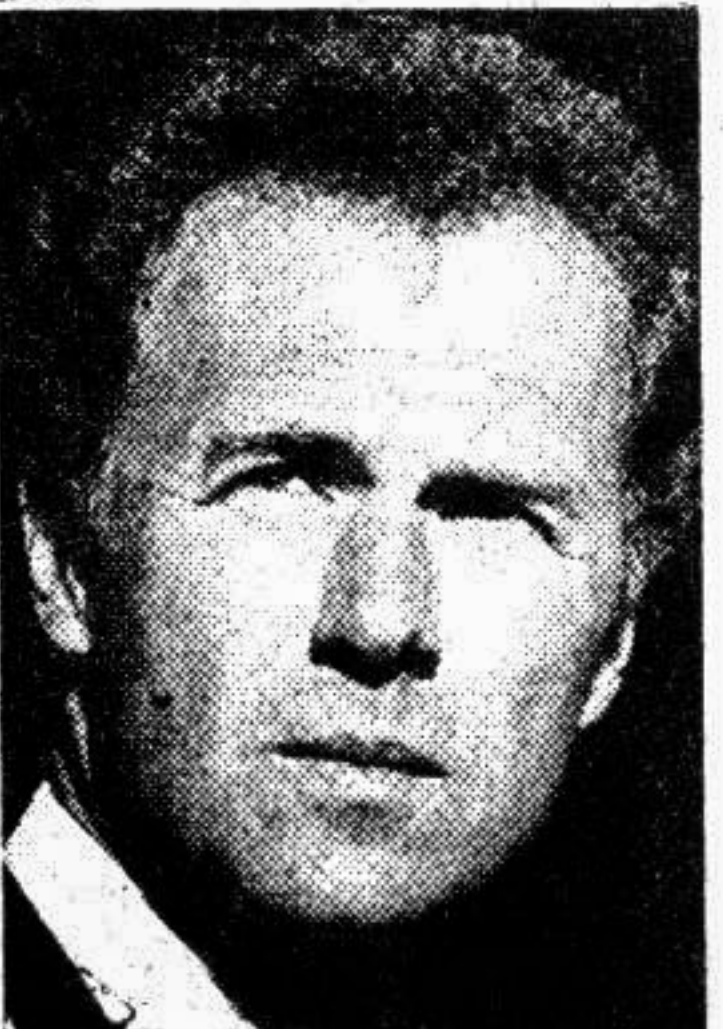
The prerequisites are there. Compared to last year we have only made use of 70 to 80 per cent of our potential so far. When our long-term injured are back on board we can really expect to do things in the new year."

Stefan Effenberg will be available for Bayern despite worries about a muscle twinge in his thigh.

Lothar Matthaeus, who otherwise would have been playing his last game in Bayern colours if it hadn't been for his late agreement with the New York/New Jersey Metrosstars, is also set to play.

He won't be getting a send-off now until the middle of March having agreed to put off his

move to the US until then. Bayern's Ghanaian defender Samuel Kuffour will miss the Mainz game though because of commitments to play for his country in the African Nations Cup.



BECKENBAUER

Hansa Rostock are confident going into their quarter-final on Wednesday against fellow First Division opponents VfB Stuttgart after beating Schalke Sunday 1-0.

"If we fight the way we did against Schalke then we have to fear going up against Stuttgart," Rostock coach Andreas Zachhuber said.

For Bernard Dietz, coach of second division club VfL Bochum, Tuesday evening will spell his retirement from professional coaching regardless of

whether his men beat Cup holders Werder Bremen or not.

Dietz was a temporary stand-in to replace the sacked Ernst Middendorp and despite pleas by management and fans to stay on next year he insists he doesn't want the stress and will go back to coaching Bochum's juniors.

As for Bremen, a win would continue their excellent Cup record and secure them their sixth semi-final berth in the competition this decade.

Irked Ireland

won't appeal

DUBLIN, Dec 21 (Reuters): The Football Association of Ireland (FAI) said on Tuesday it will not appeal against fines totalling 23,000 Swiss francs (\$14,510) imposed by UEFA following last month's Euro 2000 play-off against Turkey.

"We would appeal if we thought there was a reasonable chance of changing the findings," said FAI Chief Executive Bernard O'Byrne.

"UEFA have been unreasonable and unfair to the FAI throughout the entire Group Eight qualifying series. Therefore, we have decided to cut our losses," he added.

The FAI was fined 10,000 Swiss francs (\$6,313) after scuffles broke out between players at the end of the second leg in Bursa, Turkey went through to Euro 2000 on the away goals rule after the second leg ended in a scoreless draw.

Hagi Romania's

player of century

BUCHAREST, Dec 21: Gheorghe Hagi was named the best Romanian soccer player of the century on Monday, after being an inspiration to his national teammates for the most successful decade in their history, reports Reuters.

"It's a great honour to be named best player for a span of 100 years," Hagi said after the ceremony which was held behind closed doors by the Romanian Soccer Federation.

"I couldn't dream of anything better than this."

Hagi, 34, made his debut in the national squad in 1981 and played for Spanish giants Real Madrid and Barcelona in a distinguished club career.

He led Romania to the 1994 World Cup quarterfinals -- the best performance in the country's soccer history.

He scored 35 goals in 119 matches for Romania including three World Cup finals and the Euro 1996 finals.

"My first thought now is to prepare with my team mates for (what I hope will be) our best performance in history at next year's European finals," Hagi said.

Romania will play at Euro 2000 in Belgium and the Netherlands in the same group as England, Germany and Portugal.

Former team coach Anghel Iordanescu was named the best Romanian coach of the century at Monday's ceremony.

Kanchelskis

not for sale

GLASGOW, Dec 21: Rangers chairman David Murray insisted on Tuesday that unsettled Russian international winger Andrei Kanchelskis would not be sold despite being only a fringe player this season, reports AFP.

The 30-year-old Ukrainian-born star, who scored eight goals in 30 appearances last season after his record 5.5 million price move from Serie A outfit Fiorentina, has shown mere glimpses of the form that he produced for Manchester United and Everton before he opted for his ill-fated move to Italy.

This season, however, he has spent most of the season on the substitutes' bench as coach Dick Advocaat attempted to make Rangers a dominant force in Europe this term and appeared certain to be heading out of the club.

However, Rangers' dreadful European record continued as their stunning Champions League qualifying win over UEFA Cup holders Parma was followed by elimination from the Champions League first round group and then losing on penalties to Borussia Dortmund in the UEFA Cup third round.

Kanchelskis, though, made the most of a rare start last Saturday with a double in the 5-1 win over Motherwell and Murray believes the player is still part of Advocaat's long-term plans.

"We are not in the business of promoting the sale of Andrei Kanchelskis," Murray said.

"He is an important member of our squad and, as long as he continues to show the kind of form he displayed against Motherwell, I do not think Dick (Advocaat) will have a problem with him."

"Not only did he contribute two goals, he also played his part in what was a very good team performance."

"I believe Dick was very happy with his performance."

Kanchelskis, who started his career with Ukrainian giants Dynamo Kyiv, spent five hugely successful seasons at Manchester United, making 123 appearances and scoring 28 goals, before moving to Everton for two seasons.

However, his spell in Italy with Fiorentina was pretty undistinguished scoring two goals in just 17 appearances.

Milan rope in

Spanish striker

MADRID, Dec 21: AC Milan have agreed the signing of Spanish under-21 striker Jose Mari Romero from Atletico Madrid for a Spanish record fee, the Madrid club said on Tuesday, reports Reuters.

The Italian giants are paying 3,200 million pesetas (19.46 million dollars) for the Seville-born forward -- making him the most expensive Spanish player in history.

"The deal has been completed," a spokeswoman for Atletico said. "And it's the most anyone's paid for a Spanish player."

"It's a great coup. We've been thinking of him for a long time," Milan vice-chairman Adriano Galliani told reporters.

Dani Garcia, who moved from Real Mallorca to Barcelona for 15 million dollars over the summer, was previously the most expensive Spanish signing.

Jose Mari was due in Milan on Tuesday for a medical prior to putting pen to paper and will be eligible to play when Serie A returns from its winter break on January 6.

He is expected to be presented officially on Thursday.

"I'm going to Italy to triumph," he was quoted as saying in Spanish newspapers.

"Milan are one of the biggest clubs in the world and this is an important move for me."

According to media reports in Spain, the deal will see him net around 1,500 million pesetas (9.12 million dollars) for each of the five years of his contract.

Jose Mari, 21, scored nine goals in each of his first two seasons at Atletico after moving from Sevilla in 1997.

Amazing

Australians



PARIS, Dec 21 (AFP): After a slow start to the event, Australia proved their dominance in somewhat anti-climatic fashion as they romped to victory against Pakistan to lift the World Cup for the second time.

Across the tournament as a whole the Aussies' resilience made them deserved winners -- but crucially it was opponents' inability to seize the moment which ultimately proved the most benefit as South Africa threw away their chance in the semi before Pakistan collapsed in the final.

It was a moment to savour for the men from Down Under as they made up for their crushing defeat in the previous final by Sri Lanka in Lahore by blitzing Pakistan at Lord's by eight wickets in the most one-sided final ever played.

But Pakistan were on a hiding to nothing before a ball had been bowled after skipper Wasim Akram surprisingly decided his side would bat first.

A jubilant Australian attack promptly skilful his men out for 132, the lowest total ever recorded in a World Cup final with the old firm of Glenn McGrath and man of the match Shane Warne the Pakistan's chief tormentors.

The Aussies lost just two wickets as they romped to victory on the back of keeper Adam Gilchrist's 54.

Australian pace spearhead McGrath immediately said his country's second world title after 1987 was even more exciting and challenged his compatriots to target a repeat.

"It's slightly easier to reach the top than it is to stay at the top. We've got it ahead of us to stay there and continue playing very good Test cricket as well as one-day cricket. The challenge is to stay at number one."

Paul Reiffel relieved McGrath after his early blitz and Tom Moody took over from Fleming to give the Pakistani batsmen some brief respite. McGrath might have become the villain as he dropped a mistimed effort off Razzaq but Steve Waugh was rather less generous. Razzaq was on his way back to the pavilion and his side's moment had passed.

There would be no way back. Shane Warne and Reiffel -- who had Inzamam controversially caught behind -- had Pakistan rocking again before McGrath returned to add more torment.

Wasim and Azhar struck several defiant blows in a valiant attempt to rescue an increasingly hopeless cause but the tail wagged only limply and with just 133 as their target Australia made a cracking start with openers Mark Waugh and Adam Gilchrist at the crease fending off Wasim Akram and Shoaib Akhtar to pass fifty in

just eight overs. Saqlain Mushtaq ousted Gilchrist, caught by Inzamam Haq at mid-on for a superb 54, and Wasim snared Ricky Ponting for 24 but Waugh and Darren Lehmann comfortably took the Australians through to victory.

Back home, Akram had to suffer the indignity of fans burning his effigy but the shortest sporting life-expectancy across the sporting year in Pakistan proved to be that of the team coach as five left, finishing up with a sacking for English-born Richard Pybus after a 3-0 Test whitewash against -- you guessed it -- Australia.

"You can't put all the blame of defeat in Australia on the management. I think players were not prepared for that exacting series," was Pybus' parting shot.

There was more Pakistani discord in December when pace bowler Waqar Younis slammed skipper Wasim Akram, saying a personal grudge has kept him away from the game and ruined his career.

The two were once known as the two 'Ws' but fell out six seasons ago after Waqar sided with a group of players opposed to having Wasim as their captain.

If the World Cup final was an anti-climax the same could not be said of the earlier stages, where England made themselves a laughing stock by failing to get through the opening phase.

Over-confidence was never better illustrated than the belated appearance -- which coincided with their sorry exit -- of the England World Cup song!

England's failure to perform was painful to behold -- but the pain was even more excruciating on an individual level for South African Herschelle Gibbs, who dropped Steve Waugh at Headingley as he attempted to flight the ball into the air in celebration in the last game before the semi-finals.

Waugh turned to Gibbs, one of the most accomplished fielders in the world, and told the 25-year-old: "You've just dropped the World Cup, son."

He was dead right. A couple of hours later Waugh had scored 120 and Australia were still in the competition, earning themselves a South African re-match in the last four.

A week later and Waugh was holding aloft the World Cup trophy on the Lord's balcony -- after a tied semi against the South Africans proved enough at Edgbaston.

Waugh was certainly not short on optimism as, three weeks earlier, following a first-round defeat by Pakistan which made it two losses in their first three matches, he had predicted: "We are capable of winning our next seven games on the trot -- and that would win us the crown."

Again, he was spot on. The Australians showed they didn't just peak for the World Cup either as they stacked up a run of five straight Test wins going into Christmas.

As the curtain came down on the year, England, so dismal throughout, were at least able to celebrate a draw as a kind of morale victory in South Africa.

Mike Atherton scored England's first Test ton in almost 12 months as he claimed his 13th Test century in the second Test against the South Africans at St George's Park in a performance which breathed defiance and suggested better things just may be around the corner.

After 1999 he and his teammates have had it certainly can't get much worse.

But one former star pronounced himself unimpressed with the year's viceroy attitudes.

Former England Test batsman Peter Willey, now an umpire, didn't mince his words as he claimed: "They just want to cheat each other."

Willey hit out after fellow umpire Rudi Koertzen faced a storm of criticism after his display in the second Test between South Africa and England.

"I know Rudi and he's a superb bloke. He's a very honest man. I stood in a game when England got all the decisions their way and nothing was said," stormed Willey.

"Television isn't one hundred per cent right all the time. Steve Waugh, who's the captain of the best team in the world -- and he's respected around the world -- said to me that the big screen should be banned from every ground in the world. He said it's not fair on the umpires," Willey told the BBC.

The year was marred by the deaths of West Indian fast bowling legend Malcolm Marshall in November after a battle with colon cancer aged 41.

Marshall was the sixth highest wicket-taker in Test history and how the calypso kings could have done with his brilliance as the Windies collapsed to a nine-wicket loss in the first Test against New Zealand.

Skipper Brian Lara cited complacency and his own batting as reasons why they threw away a dominant first-day position -- and took full responsibility for the loss.

Good news for

Brett, Mark



MELBOURNE, Dec 21: The touring Indians did not bat an eyelid at the news Tuesday that fast bowler Brett Lee was included in the Australian team for the Boxing Day Test here, reports AFP.

"I think Lee's inclusion was expected," said Indian coach Kapil Dev of the 23-year-old, rated by Australian captain Steve Waugh as the fastest bowler in the world.

"I don't know if he will play the Test, but if he does, we are ready for him," Kapil said.

"My batsmen are not afraid of fast bowling. I think it's wrong to think that Indians don't play them well."

Lee's inclusion for Sunday's Test at the Melbourne cricket ground comes on the back of an eight-wicket haul for New South Wales against Western Australia on the bouncy wicket at Perth.

A similar wicket is expected here, giving Lee a good chance to earn his Test cap in place of seamer Michael Kasprovic, who played in the first Test.

Waugh said Lee bowled faster than the highly-rated Pakistani Shoaib Akhtar, who quickest delivery in the recent Test series was timed at around 155 kilometers an hour.

"Lee was outstanding," Waugh said. "He gave us a lot of firepower and as a captain it is always great to have someone who is bowling real quick and making it hard for the opposition."

The Indians have got a taste of Lee's pace twice on the tour, and succumbed both times.

Lee grabbed 3-57 and 4-77 playing for New South Wales on the slow wicket at Sydney earlier this month and devastated the tourists later with 4-25 in a one-day festival match against the Australian Prime Minister's team at Canberra.

At Canberra, Lee's victims included master batsman and captain Sachin Tendulkar for two, besides Venkat Laxman and Sadagopan Ramesh, the tourists' likely opening pair for the second Test.

Mark Waugh, who was retained in the Australian team despite his poor form, told

teammate Adam Gilchrist that Lee's bowling at Perth was the quickest he had seen.

"It's not just about being quick, he is bowling with maturity beyond his years," Gilchrist said.

Kapil Dev refused to dwell on reports that the Indians believed Lee chucked his faster ball.

"I have said time and again that we have no problems with anyone," Kapil, the world's most successful Test bowler with 434 wickets, said.

"He is young, let's not ruin him by creating a controversy even before he has played his first Test match."

Lee, who was 12th man for the third and final Test against Pakistan in Perth last month, comes into the squad in place of Tasmanian Colin Miller.

The Australian selectors, meanwhile, kept their faith in Mark Waugh despite the elegant middle-order batsman passing 13 runs just three times in his past 15 Test innings.

Waugh has been openly supported by brother Steve and former captain Mark Taylor and Greg Chappell, and will take the field for his 99th Test.

Captain Steve enters the Test on the verge of another milestone. He is poised to oversee his sixth Test victory in a row, a feat only achieved by one previous Australian captain, Warwick Armstrong in 1920-21.

Armstrong led Australia to eight consecutive wins, three short of the world record held by former West Indian captain Clive Lloyd.

SQUAD

Australia beat India by 285 runs in the first Test in Adelaide last week. Michael Slater, Greg Blewett, Justin Langer, Mark Waugh, Steve Waugh (capt), Ricky Ponting, Adam Gilchrist, Shane Warne, Damien Fleming, Glenn McGrath, Michael Kasprovic, Brett Lee (12th man to be named later).

Dugarry on

the move?

MARSEILLE, France, Dec 21: Unsettled French international striker Christophe Dugarry is considering offers from Bordeaux and Lens as he bids to gain a release from troubled Marseille, reports AFP.

The World Cup winner has struggled in a struggling team this season and was last week attacked by supporters after Marseille slumped to a 5-1 loss to St Etienne.

Dugarry's agent Luciano D'Onofrio said Monday that Bordeaux were favourites to land Dugarry's signature. Marseille are seeking a fee in the region of 4 million pounds (about six million dollars) for his signature.

