

## PM seconds Steve's offer

REUTERS, Melbourne

Australia's Prime Minister John Howard has defended Australia's cricket captain Steve Waugh against charges the team had turned a trip to Gallipoli's battlefields into a photo-opportunity.

Australia's players stopped off at Gallipoli earlier this week to lay wreaths at memorials for more than 8,000 Australians who died battling Turkish forces in 1915 during World War One.

Waugh's team, ranked number one in the world in Test cricket, paid their respects while on their way to Britain for a three-month Ashes tour including five Tests against England.

The Australian newspaper said on Wednesday that the Gallipoli visit had been "hijacked by the image-makers at the Australian Cricket Board (ACB)" to divert attention from bad publicity surrounding the sport internationally amid a match-fixing inquiry.

Waugh and his team re-enacted a photograph of Australian soldiers playing cricket at Gallipoli.

But as controversy over the visit began to mount on Tuesday, Howard said he was surprised by suggestions the Gallipoli visit was inappropriate.

"I think that's unreasonable," said Howard, an ardent cricket fan. "Any Australian who has been to Gallipoli is quite moved by it," he told reporters.

ACB chief executive Malcolm Speed told ABC Radio on Tuesday: "We're always looking for positive publicity opportunities but...I think the major driver was the motivational aspect of it and just the lifetime experience for the players."

"They're going into a battle. It's a battle of a lot less significance than the battle at Gallipoli but a battle nonetheless."

## Sirajganj cricket

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sirajganj

Sirajganj Mohammedan Sporting Club defeated Shaheed Ansar Ali Smriti Club by five-run in the Megdur cricket tournament at the Char Raipur play ground yesterday.

Winning the toss, Mohammedan batted first and made 109 all out in 25 overs.

In reply, Ansar Ali were all out for 104 in 24.3 overs.

## Indian bowlers

FROM PAGE 13

**ZIMBABWE A:** First innings  
Fahim c Tendulkar b Zaheer 46  
Rennie c Dighe b Mohanty 1  
Masakadza c Dravid b Nehra 8  
Wishart c Dighe b Zaheer 68  
Evans b Zaheer 0  
Vijoen lbw b Singh 5  
Taibu c Das b Singh 1  
Friend b Singh 4  
Murphy not out 9  
Strang c Tendulkar b Nehra 0  
Mutendera c Tendulkar b Nehra 13  
Extras: (lb-6, nb-14) 20  
Total: (All out in 54.4 overs) 175

Fall of wickets: 1-10, 2-47, 3-134, 4-134, 5-139, 6-139, 7-141, 8-149, 9-153

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Zaheer	15	3	41	3
Mohanty	12	3	34	1
Nehra	12.4	1	41	3
Singh	11	3	25	3
Ganguly	4	0	26	0

## Must win

FROM PAGE 13

sion and headed instead for the seaside and a local amusement park.

The squad called off their afternoon work-out at the ground and set off on a 55-mile trip to Blackpool, the home of a large selection of fairground entertainment, rides and rollercoasters.

Coach Richard Pybus said: "We've practised and practised and practised and now we are having a bit of fun."

"We are doing the scariest rides and having a great time," Pakistan's decision raised a few eyebrows at Old Trafford — and prompted a smile from England captain Alec Stewart — after the home team had trained in the morning.

But Pybus argued that his players were in good shape after crushing Leicestershire in their final warm-up match and then training for the next two days.

**TEAMS:**  
ENGLAND (from): Alec Stewart (captain), Michael Atherton, Marcus Trescothick, Michael Vaughan, Nick Knight, Graham Thorpe, Dominic Cork, Ian Ward, Darren Gough, Andy Caddick, Matthew Hoggard, Robert Croft.

PAKISTAN: Waqar Younis (captain), Saeed Anwar, Abdur Razzaq, Younis Khan, Inzamam ul Haq, Yousuf Youhana, Azhar Mahmood, Rashid Latif, Wasim Akram, Shoaib Akhtar, Faisal Iqbal, Saqlain Mushtaq.

Umpires: David Shepherd (England) and Eddie Nichols (West Indies). Television: Ray Julian.

Match referee: Brian Hastings (New Zealand).

## Waugh plans early assault

Cricket

REUTERS, Worcester

Australia aim to reopen "some old scars" from the very start of the Ashes series against England to reinforce their dominance over their oldest cricket rivals, Steve Waugh said on Wednesday.

The Australian captain, speaking a day after the tourists' arrival, praised England's recent results but said that his side had to be considered the favourites.

He said: "You can't take anything for granted but we've had some good results against England and a lot of the personnel hasn't changed."

"From our point of view, if we get on top early we can perhaps open some old scars up."

England take on Pakistan in the second and final Test at Old Trafford on Thursday, with a one-day series between the three teams leading up to the five-Test Ashes series.

A draw at Old Trafford would be enough to secure England a fifth consecutive series victory, a feat they last achieved 30 years ago.

"England are playing very good cricket," Waugh told a press conference. "If they win this Test match against Pakistan they'll be feeling very confident."

"We lost our last two Test matches (in India) so form-wise England have got the form on the board in recent times. But we've

got a very good side so I would suggest we still go in as favourites. I am the only one to lose against England in an Ashes series. I would like to keep the record like that."

Australia, ranked first in the new World Test Championship two places ahead of their hosts, have won the last five Ashes series.

They open their tour with a three-day match against Worcestershire, starting on Friday. The Ashes begin at Edgbaston on July 5.

Australia coach John Buchanan added: "I don't think there is any

question that Australia should be number one. Obviously England's current form is good — they should be up at the top somewhere."

Vice-captain Adam Gilchrist pointed out that England, ranked bottom of the Test-playing nations just two years ago, had managed to transform their fortunes despite largely sticking to the same players.

"Nasser (Hussain) has led well. The personnel is similar to what they had in previous years but perhaps they now have more direction," he said.



THE TROPHIES THEY ARE AFTER: Australia captain Steve Waugh (R) and his deputy Adam Gilchrist hold the trophies for the Ashes Test series and NatWest tri-nation one-day competition after a press conference at New Road, Worcester yesterday.

## 'Bowlers need to improve'

Cricket

REUTERS, New Delhi

India's three consecutive Test series abroad starting with the two-game series in Zimbabwe next week will be a major challenge for their bowlers, former all-rounder Roger Binny said on Tuesday.

"It will be a good test for our bowling. We have the batting, one of the best line-ups in the world. They (bowlers) will have to come good," Binny told this news agency.

The Indian team has landed in Zimbabwe desperate to claim their first Test series abroad in eight years and the first game starts in Harare on June 7.

The team goes on to play Test series in Sri Lanka and South Africa immediately after the Zimbabwe tour.

Binny said Indian spinners were impressive on helpful home tracks but struggled abroad. Young off-spinner Harbhajan Singh had taken 32 wickets to rally India to an upset 2-1 home win over Australia in a three-match home Test series earlier this year.

But India's Test series win abroad was in Sri Lanka in 1993 and the last success outside the sub-continent had come 15 years ago, a 2-0 win over England in a three-Test series in 1986.

"The bowling has got to be sorted out in the next three tests," Binny, a member of India's 1983

World Cup winning side and the junior national coach, said.

India have chosen a pace-dominated squad for Zimbabwe with five of the seven bowlers being medium-pace.

Former skipper Sunil Gavaskar and his Test opening partner Anshuman Gaekwad have criticised the selection of five pacemen for a short Test tour.



ROGER BINNY

Gaekwad, who coached the national side before New Zealand's John Wright took over late last year, said Indian players should adapt quickly to conditions abroad.

"It's a question of adapting. It boils down to toughness, applying one's mind in challenging conditions," Gaekwad told in a recent interview.

Gaekwad said: "Our bowlers

tend to get worked up by the extra bounce."

Binny and Gaekwad attributed India's 3-0 Test whitewash in Australia early last year to poor batting and said such displays led to their being labelled poor fighters under pressure.

"But the players realise this now. The feeling is Indian players are too relaxed, give away the game too easily. We need to toughen up a bit," Binny said.

Binny, who guided India to the Under-19 World Cup last year, wanted junior and "A" teams to tour abroad more often to prepare upcoming players for the senior squad.

"On a big Test tour to Australia (in 1999-2000), we had at least six newcomers."

"If they had toured there six months in advance with an 'A' squad, they'd have settled down for the Test series," he said.

The Indian board set up a National Cricket Academy (NCA) last year on the lines of the Australian academy to train talented youngsters. "It is not just practising. It is on how to approach the game," he said.

Binny said physical fitness and fielding were given high priority in the academy.

Earlier, all aspects of training used to be packed into a single session but the Australian methods had helped Indian coaches focus on specific areas in each session, he added.

## Andre has a point to prove

Tennis

AFP, Paris

At 31 years Andre Agassi's dress sense may have become more conservative, but the world number one proved that he still has that winning style on the game's toughest surface.

The shaven-headed Las Vegas marked his return to the scene of his greatest triumph here Tuesday with a 6-2, 6-3, 7-6 (7/5) victory over Sweden's Thomas Johansson on the slow red clay of the Philippe-Chatrier Centre Court.

Ironically the win comes on the court newly-named in memory of former French Tennis Federation and International Tennis Federation president Chatrier, who once suggested banning the young American because of his unconventional clothing, resulting in Agassi calling the Frenchman "a bozo".

"I did? That was me?" said Agassi, feigning a lapse in memory.

"I look back with fond memories in a lot of ways here, that's for sure," he continued.

Roland Garros is a special place for Agassi.

It was here in 1999 that he made his comeback and became just the fifth man in history to complete a Grand Slam collection of singles titles.

"As you get older you cherish those moments more and more. It was my last Grand Slam title and I won coming off a difficult time in my life," said a reminiscent Agassi.

And competing in his 13th French Open here the American is only too aware that the competition is getting younger and tougher.

"I think this is the most difficult tournament. It always has been. It requires the most mentally and

physically."

"The clay's different, the conditions are different. Even Paris day to day is different. I feel ready but it's a lot of hard work and it's going to get a lot tougher."

Agassi comes into this year's tournaments with wins in the Australian Open, Indian Wells and Miami Masters Series events, but his warm-up routine has left much to be desired.

He missed Monte Carlo, lost early in Rome and then found himself despatched in the third



ANDRE AGASSI

round of the Hamburg Masters Series.

But Agassi said that he wasn't disappointed by his lack of match wins in the run-up to Roland Garros.

"I'm not necessarily concerned. While I wish I would have won more matches that would have obviously helped me, I'd rather win the matches here."

And the American believes that his experience will show him the way here.

"My experience is that if you can get a few matches and find a way to work through the difficult situations you start to get really

comfortable and very effective with your whole game in the second week."

But one sure thing this week, the former hell-raiser won't be making any headlines for his gear.

"I think I've changed a lot. I just wear a lot more simpler, you know, classy yet chic."

## Old Trafford

FROM PAGE 13

British authorities have blamed the trouble in Oldham, which saw white and mainly Bangladeshi and Pakistani youths battling each other and the police in the worst racial clashes for years, on white extremists from outside the area.

England host Pakistan in the second Test starting on Thursday at Old Trafford, the home of county side Lancashire. Oldham is roughly 10 miles away.

Cumbers added: "I'm aware of the problems close to Manchester in Oldham."

"It's a problem caused by a few people. We are working closely with the police to see if extra precautions need to be taken."

He said he would be worried if white ultra-right activists, who he described as a "pretty nasty group of people," attempted to get into the ground during the Test match.

"If there was any concern it would be at their infiltration into the ground, but I would hope the police intelligence would be good enough and they will warn us," he said, adding there were 20 cameras around the ground.

## Farhad does

FROM PAGE 13

Praniti KC: Selim, Yusuf, Murad, Nasir, Mohsin, Nayem (Love/L Ashraf), Tutul, Belal, Rashid, Momin and Anwar.

Referee: Ehsanul Haque.

## MRF chief coach in Dhaka

SPORTS REPORTER

MRF Pace Foundation chief coach T Shekhar arrived in Dhaka from India on Wednesday to conduct a five-day coaching session with emerging local pace bowlers. The short programme have been organised by the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB).

The workshop begins at the Dhanmondi Club ground today. Later it may be shifted to the Bangladesh Krira Shiksha Protisthan (BKSP) in Saver.

The BCB have already called up 26 young pacemen for the workshop. The number is likely to be reduced to 10 after the first day and Shekhar will make a final selection of four bowlers who will be later sent to the MRF Pace Foundation in Madras for a month long training.

## Nick keen to grab the opportunity

REUTERS, Manchester

England batsman Nick Knight hopes he can exploit captain Nasser Hussain's misfortune and help fulfil a "burning ambition" in the second and final Test against Pakistan.

The Warwickshire left-hander, called up to the England squad after Hussain broke his thumb in the first Test, is desperate to shine at Old Trafford to earn himself a starting spot against Australia in the Ashes series.

"It's a burning ambition to play a Test against Australia," he said. "That would be a massive goal for me. It's the only country I haven't played against."

## ROK feel

FROM PAGE 13

nute his first full game, having played nine minutes as a substitute against Turkey last year.

An Anelka shot deflected away for a corner. From the kick Christophe Dugary harassed Lee who was unable to hold the ball. Dugary put the ball back in the danger area and Marlet scored with an overhead strike.

South Korean captain Hong Myung-Bo was 'the villain of the second goal, bringing down Anelka for a free kick just outside the penalty area.

Robert Pires' shot came off the wall and while some French players claimed a retake because the defenders had rushed forward early, Vieira smashed the ball into the net from 20 metres (yards).

It was the Arsenal player's first goal for his national side. "Finally I got the goal I have been waiting so long for," said Vieira. "It is not really my job to get the goals but it was still important."

A minute later Hong brought Anelka down again, this time in the area. South Korean heads fell but Dugary's spot kick was too weak, allowing Lee to pull off an easy save.

South Korea's three-man attack were continually dwarfed by the French defence and the world champions had chances to extend the lead. After 32 minutes Marlet fired just over the crossbar from outside the penalty area.

But seconds later France were back on the attack. Eric Carriere of Nantes, making his debut, put a gentle ball along the ground into the goal area, leaving Marlet and Anelka to scramble the ball past Lee in a bundle of legs. Anelka got the credit.

South Korea were stronger in the second half as France eased up. The introduction of Hwang Sun-Hong added force to the South Korean attack.

Seoul Ki-Hyeon had one shot fired away by Ulrich Rame in the French goal.

But second half substitute Djorkaef put the defence in panic again.

He met a Pire cross and shot in from the edge of the penalty area. It was his 28th goal for France, putting him two behind Jean-Pierre Papin in the all time national records led by Michel Platini and Just Fontaine at 40.

In injury time, Wiltord, another late substitute, wove around the tired Korean defenders to fire into an empty net.

Australia played Mexico in the second Group A match, Japan, Brazil, Canada and Cameroon dispute Group B which starts Thursday in Japan.

**TEAMS:**  
France: Ulrich Rame, Willy Sagnol, Marcel Desailly (capt), Mikael Silvestre, Bixente Lizarazu, Patrick Vieira, Eric Carriere, Robert Pires (Olivier Dacourt 83), Christophe Dugary (Youri Djorkaef 73), Steve Marlet (Sylvain Wiltord 66), Nicolas Anelka.

South Korea: Lee Woon-Jae, Song Chung-Gu, Hong Myung-Bo (capt), Kim Tae-Young (Ha Seok-Ju 75), Lee Min-Sung, Choi Sung-Yong, Ko Jong-Su (An Hyeon-Yeon 69), Lee Sung-Pyo (Hwang Sun-Hong 45), Park Ji-Sung, Yoo Sang-Chul, Seol Ki-Hyeon.

Referee: Gamal Mahmoud al-Ghandour (Egypt)

## Kuerten on course

Tennis

AFP, Paris

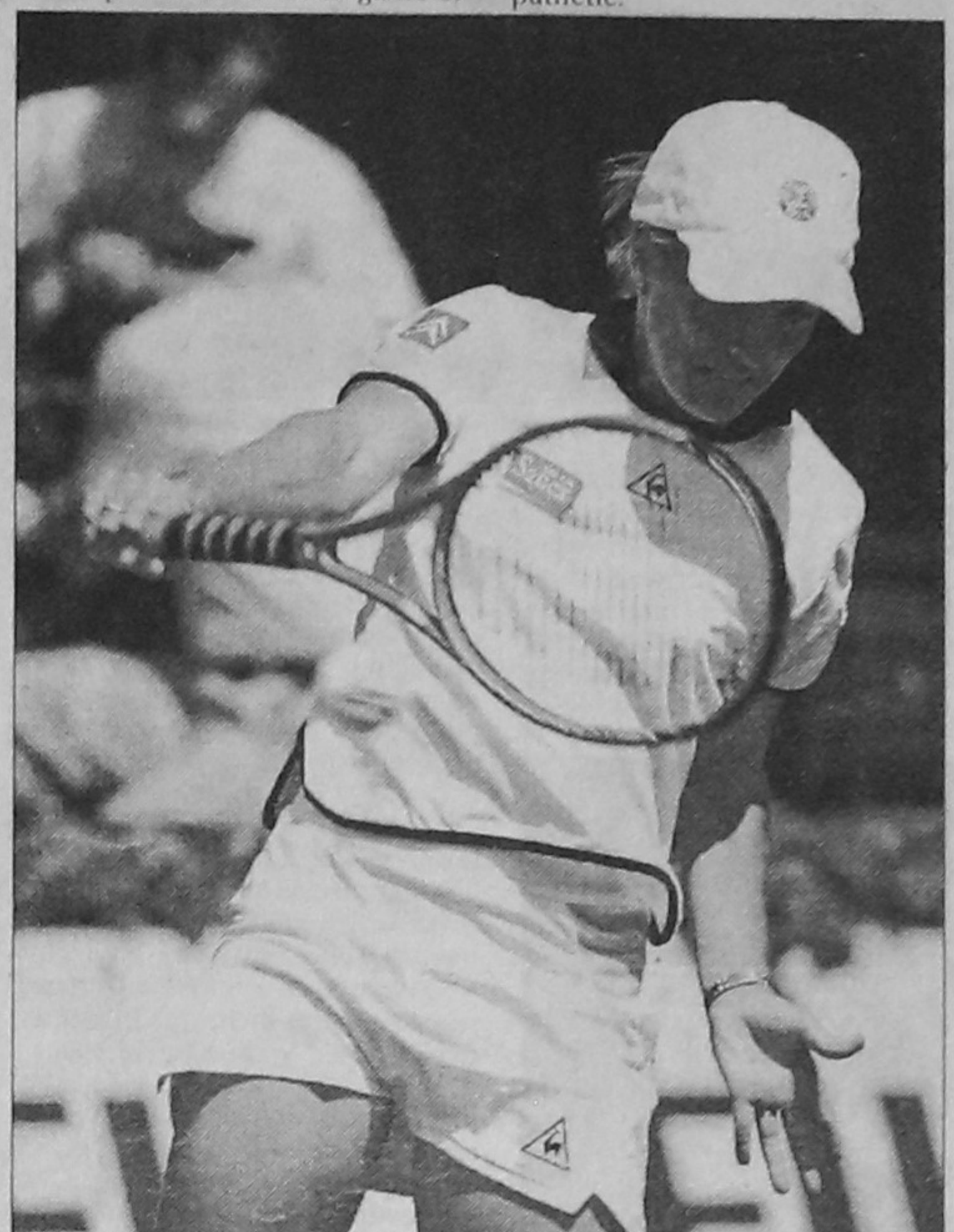
Two former French Open kings and one king-in-waiting reached the third round of the men's singles at the French Open on Wednesday, with defending champion Gustavo Kuerten keeping on track for a third crown after beating Argentine Agustin Calleri 6-4, 6-4, 6-4.

Top seed Kuerten missed two match points in the ninth game of

play well," said 'Guga', who was backed as ever by a vociferous and colourful Brazilian contingent of fans.

Joining Kuerten in the last 32 was 1996 champion and Russian seventh seed Yevgeny Kafelnikov, who swatted US lucky loser Cecil Mamiit 7-6 (7/3), 3-6, 6-3, 7-6 (7/2).

"The French Open is bringing the best out of my game, no question about it. It's a special occasion," said Kafelnikov, whose recent dire form he denounced as 'pathetic'.



Justine Henin of Belgium plays a backhand return against Argentinean Paola Suarez during their French Open second round clash in Roland Garros on May 30.

the final set as Calleri acted his way out of trouble but the Brazilian was not to be denied and served out to take the tie when his rival fired long after 2hr 3min.

The 24-year-old Brazilian, bidding for a third title here after 1997 and last year, sent his second Argentine opponent packing in three days having ended the dreams of Guillermo Coria, likewise in straight sets, on Monday and appeared to be over the back and thigh ailments which marred his preparations.

"I did not play with the same intensity as in the first match but when I needed to play well I did

Also through, and in some style, is Spanish fourth seed Juan Carlos Ferrero, who lost a momentous semi-final to Kuerten 12 months ago.

On Wednesday, the 21-year-old destroyed South African Marcos Ondruska 6-2, 6-2, 6-0 in just 1hr 39min.

"I started off really well though. I was tired after the previous match and I believe I was very strong all the way through this one," said Ferrero, who came here with an abductor strain which had threatened his participation.

"Maybe if the matches get longer I might have more prob-

## FRENCH OPEN DIARY

AFP, Paris

French Open diary on the third day of the tournament here Wednesday:

**A-ROD'S A QUICK THINKER.**  
US teen Andy Roddick is being touted as the greatest talent to come out of the United States since Andre Agassi and Pete Sampras and one of the reasons why is that he's the quickest learner around.

So says coach Tarik Benhabiles, who 'discovered' the 18-year-old two years ago.

Roddick comes to Roland Garros with back-to-back clay wins under his belt at Atlanta and Houston and Benhabiles says he remembers clearly how he was struck by the qualities of the then 16-year-old hopeful straight away.

"I came across a player I had always dreamed about. A 16-year-old lad very mature for his age, above average and who sees things very quickly," Benhabiles told L'Equipe.

"What sometimes requires six months work with another player he took on board in 48 hours!"

Although Agassi himself has warned against the dangers of

putting too much weight of expectation on the youngster's shoulders Benhabiles says Roddick can handle it.

"Andy is mentally prepared. My goal is simply that he is happy and revels in playing great matches."

**LET US PRAY, SAYS SERENE SERENA.**

US sixth seed Serena Williams admits her tournament hopes are on a wing and a prayer at Roland Garros. Having battled past French tigress Sarah Pitkowski in three sets on Tuesday she said she had had to fight extra hard with the massively patriotic crowd against her.

As the match reached its climax the umpire had to call for calm on several occasions but Serena says she's used to that.

"I get that all the time. I don't know how I deal with it. Do a lot of praying," she grinned.

**ANYONE FOR ANYTHING OTHER THAN TENNIS?**

Pete Sampras may not have tasted glory as yet in all his years of coming to Roland Garros but the man who has won more Grand Slam titles than any other man in

history is a born winner - as long as he's playing tennis.

Anything else, and he's a good loser.

"I'm really just competitive on the tennis court," said Sampras after just edging out French qualifier Cedric Kieffermann in five sets in Tuesday's titanic first-round tie.

Off court, that competitive streak is much less visible.

"I'm not competitive really anywhere else. Even when I play golf or do other things I don't need to win everything," said Sampras, who said when it came to playing