

Fast gun Ngam injured again

South African fast bowler Mfuneko Ngam will be out of action for several weeks after it was revealed he had suffered another stress fracture.

South African team physiotherapist Craig Smith told journalists on Friday that Ngam had suffered another stress fracture, this time in the right leg.

"We have poor news," Smith said. "Mfuneko Ngam has a stress fracture of the right tibia. Pain started about ten days ago and got worse to the point that bowling in the nets on Monday he was sore and couldn't continue.

"He had a bone scan this week which came out positive and he's going to be out for a four to six week period.

"It's obviously very disturbing that this is now his fifth stress fracture in the last five years, all but one in different areas of the body."

Smith said the team would consult with specialists to determine why Ngam is susceptible to the injury.

Ngam was named one of South Africa's five cricketers of the year this month after his impressive debut in international cricket last season.

Masur for automatic entry for Davis Cup finalist

AFP, Sydney

Davis Cup finalists should be rewarded with automatic entry in the second round of the following year's competition, Australian team coach Wally Masur said Friday.

Masur wants the International Tennis Federation to break with tradition to ensure the world's elite tennis players are in peak form for the team competition.

Masur fears for the likes of Australian spearhead Lleyton Hewitt, who will be expected to play for five months with few breaks and then have to turn out for next year's first-round tie.

Hewitt has already played 86 matches, more than anyone else on tour this year, and is committed to at least two more tournaments, plus the Davis Cup final, before re-reading himself for the Australian Open in January.

And missing Australia's first-round tie next year just to rest is an unlikely scenario for the US Open champion.

"Maybe the logical time for him to have some time off would be after the Aussie (Open) but he's off to Argentina," Masur said.

"So this is part of the problem. I think there should be some reward for the guys who put in and win the Davis Cup, but it's not to be.

"One thing I would probably like to see is a bye in the first round for the winners and runners-up in Davis Cup.

Barbi banned

AFP, Rome

Italian marathon runner Roberto Barbi has been suspended for four years by his federation following a positive test for EPO (erythropoietin), according to an Italian athletics federation statement Friday.

Barbi tested positive for the popular endurance-enhancing drug at the world athletics championships in Edmonton following analysis of both his blood and urine on July 30.

He was suspended on a provisional basis on August 16 following the first positive test finding.

A second test on September 5 confirmed the results of the first test.

Cairns craving for action



REUTERS, Canberra

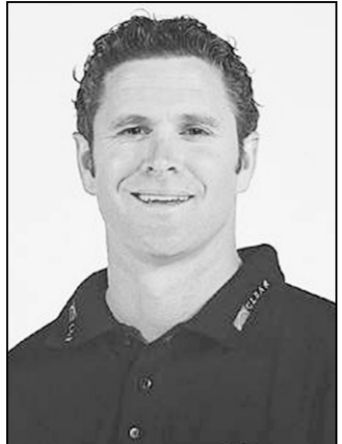
New Zealand's match-winning all-rounder Chris Cairns said on Saturday he had fast-tracked his comeback from knee surgery so that he could be ready to face Australia in the first Test next month.

The country's second-highest Test wicket-taker has been out of action for almost a year because of injury, had surgery on his knee earlier this year.

Cairns has joined the touring side after staying home to do more strengthening and fitness work while the Kiwis played a drawn tour-opener against the Queensland Academy of Sport in Brisbane this week.

He is expected to be named in the New Zealand side to play against an Australian Capital Territory President's XI at Manuka Oval in Canberra starting on Sunday.

"If it had been another tour or another team I might have stayed Sunday.



CHRIS CAIRNS behind and kept working on my fitness but I just can't resist the challenge against Australia," Cairns said.

"It's always a battle over there. You cop so much, not only from their crowds but from the television. It is a real mental battle."

Australia's three-Test series against New Zealand starts in Brisbane on November 8.

"I'd like to have a little more work behind me but I'm happy with what I have got," Cairns said.

"A lot of the game at the top level is basically mental in any case."

Australia beat New Zealand 3-0 on the other side of the Tasman in a bad-tempered series last year.

Since then, the Black Caps have been crippled by injuries to several stars - Cairns, fellow all-rounder Dion Nash and spinner Daniel Vettori - but all three are now back on track.

"You're not going to blow [Australia] off the park but if you can stick with them into day five you are in with a chance," Cairns said.

"If we can stay fit and healthy we have an experienced team capable of doing that."

Agassi pulls out of Swiss Indoors

AFP, Basel

Andre Agassi has pulled out of next week's Swiss Indoors tennis tournament here opening the door for fellow American Pete Sampras to gain a wild-card entry.

"We have received a fax saying Agassi is not coming," a tournament spokeswoman said, adding that there was no explanation.

Second-seeded Agassi made an early exit from the Stuttgart Masters on Wednesday, losing 7-6, 7-5 to Moroccan Hicham Arazi after a hard fought second round match.

Agassi, who was playing in the German city after taking a month's break, said afterwards that he felt frustrated because his game was "very ordinary."

"Sampras gets a wild card - he is definitely coming," the spokeswoman added.

Sampras, currently number ten in the ATP rankings, won the one million dollar Swiss event in 1996.

The American put aside fears about terrorism after the September 11 attacks in the US to reach the quarter finals in Stuttgart on Thursday, defeating Chilean Marcelo Rios 4-6, 7-6, 6-4.

Britain's Tim Henman takes over Agassi's second seed spot in the Basel tournament.

Lleyton rallies, Pete tumbles



AFP, Stuttgart

Third seed Lleyton Hewitt earned sweet revenge for a loss in last year's final as he stretched his consecutive unbeaten run to 17 Friday with a quarterfinal victory at

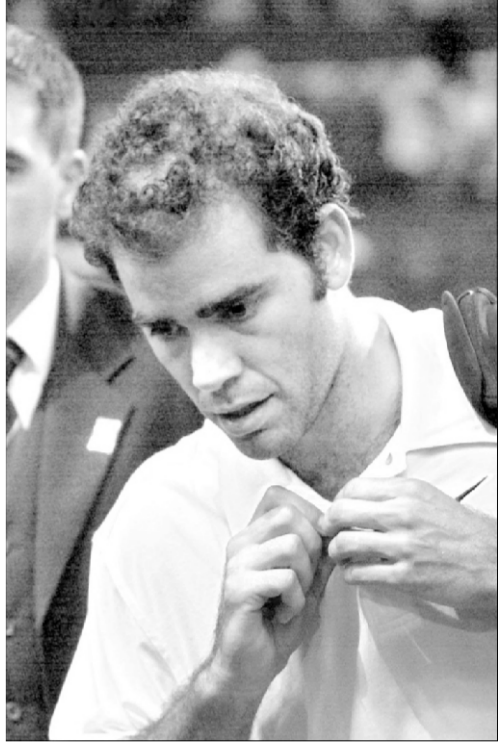
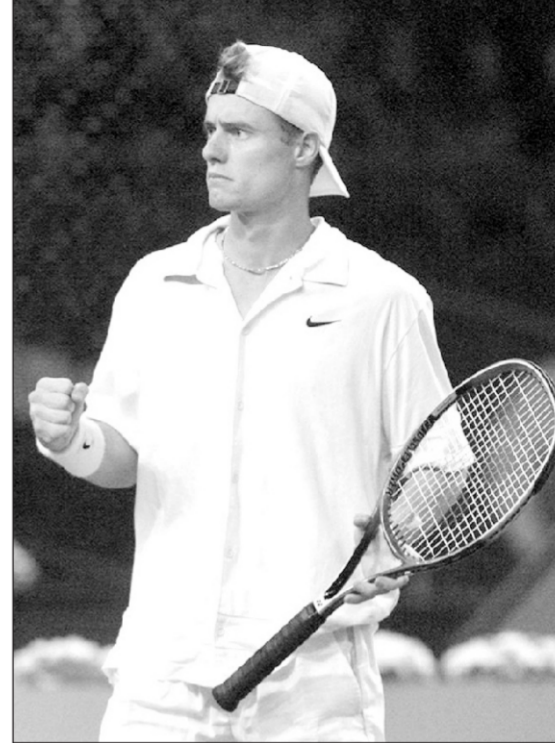
would thrust the Aussie into top place with only two more weeks of regular season competition remaining before the eight-man Masters Cup final in Sydney from November 12.

If Hewitt loses a second consecutive final here, he'll be nine points shy of the top heading in his next event starting Monday, the Stockholm Open.

life out of the 30-year-old seven-time Wimbledon winner from California.

Sampras was left pondering whether to carry on in Europe by taking a wild card into next week's Swiss Indoors or throwing away his chances for Sydney by high-tailing it back to Los Angeles.

"My arm's been sore all week," complained Sampras. "I got through my match yesterday, but it didn't get



Australian Lleyton Hewitt (L) is jubilant after beating Wayne Ferreira of South Africa and American Pete Sampras (R) leaves the court after losing in the quarterfinals to Max Mirnyi of Belarus at the Masters Series tournament on Friday.

the 2.95-million-dollar Masters Series.

Hewitt, the US Open champion who has not lost since August, picking up two titles and a Davis Cup finals spot for Australia along the way, dumped holder Wayne Ferreira out 6-7, 6-3, 6-2.

The 20-year-old Adelaide also moved a step closer to taking over top spot in the Champions points race from Brazil's Gustavo Kuerten, who was eliminated in his opening match here.

Hewitt sits second in the chase and could grab pole position with a title victory on Sunday.

But first he will have to shrug off the challenge of Tommy Haas after the German moved into a semifinal against the Australian with a come-from-behind 1-6, 6-3, 6-4 win against Britain's seventh seed Tim Henman.

At the moment, Hewitt's eyes are firmly fixed on the Masters in Sydney and the Davis Cup final rather than grabbing the world number one spot. Winning the title on Sunday

"I'm not really thinking about taking over the lead. I want to save my best for the two big events," Hewitt said after his victory over Ferreira.

His win in two hours, 18 minutes showed yet again his ability to fight back when the chips are down.

"I've had three bloody tough matches this week, coming back from a set down in all of them," Hewitt added.

"I don't know if this is helping me or not. It takes a lot out of you. I'll just have to see how I pull up for the semifinal."

While life is looking up for Hewitt, the same cannot be said for ageing American icons Pete Sampras and Andre Agassi.

Agassi has returned home after losing in the second round to Hicham Arazi of Morocco while Sampras complained of a "dead arm" in his Friday loss to big-hitting Belarusian Max Mirnyi 6-4, 6-2.

The 24-year-old Eastern European put on an intimidating display in 66 minutes to squeeze the

any better.

"Not to take anything away from Max, he played great. But when I can't serve it takes something out of my game."

Sampras, holder of a record 12 singles titles at majors, is Mirnyi's latest scalp following French Open champion Gustavo Kuerten and Wimbledon winner Goran Ivanisevic.

But Mirnyi knows he is still two matches away from securing his first title.

"I've never played this well in singles," said Mirnyi. "I've developed a lot of confidence having won and being match points down. It feels like you can't die."

The Belarusian has a chance to increase his collection of big-name scalps when he faces former French and Australian Open winner Yevgeny Kafelnikov in Saturday's semifinals.

The Russian went through with a 7-5, 6-4 win over 1999 Stuttgart winner Thomas Enqvist of Sweden.

A shot in SA's arms



REUTERS, East London

Captain Shaun Pollock said South Africa's 46-run win over India on Friday was a good confidence boost ahead of next week's final.

South Africa posted 282 for four wickets from their 50 overs after winning the toss and then dismissed India for 236.

"I thought we played well," Pollock said. "It was a good deck and the guys got us off to a fast start which was great."

"We knew when we went out to bowl that it was going to be difficult because it was such a good track and we were trying to put pressure on up front but Ganguly and Tendulkar played really well."

Pollock was particularly happy with an improved fielding display from his side, three run outs doing as much as anything to put the

Indian reply under pressure. "Our fielding's been a little bit average in the last few games. We



SHAUN POLLOCK try to set ourselves high standards and we felt that we could improve. "Today was a lot better - three runs outs obviously means we're

fielding well and I thought our catching was good too," Pollock said.

Pollock's opposite number Saurav Ganguly was left to reflect on the fact India were very much in the match before he was third out for a washbuckling 85.

"I got out at a bad time and probably should have carried on," Ganguly said. "But even after that we were in the game but we kept losing wickets at regular intervals."

He also had some harsh words about the poor running between the wickets which cost his side so dearly.

"Two of the run outs were the result of poor, poor judgement. If you have to teach these things at this level of the game you are asking for trouble," he added. "We are playing international cricket, not provincial cricket."

South Africa's win confirmed their place in the final, while India must beat Kenya in their last group game to join them.

Ponting in a purple patch



REUTERS, Sydney

Tasmania's Ricky Ponting scored his second century of the match against New South Wales on Saturday, becoming the first Australian to achieve the feat five times.

Ponting, 26, had shared the previous record of four with Don Bradman, Greg Chappell, Stuart Law and Jamie Cox.

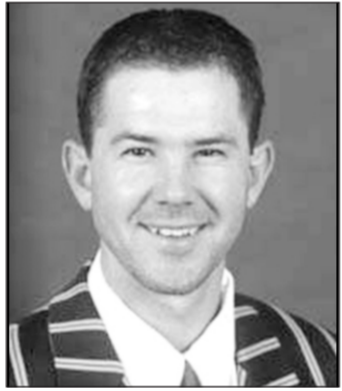
Cox, playing with Ponting for Tasmania in a four-day interstate match which ended in a draw in Sydney on Saturday, had the chance of matching him.

Cox had made 107 in his first innings but was out for 80 in the second as Tasmania scored 356 for three after leading by 15 on the first innings.

Six centuries were scored in the match after Australia veteran Mark Waugh (168) and Michael Bevan

(102) paced the New South Wales first innings of 489.

Ponting made 126 in his first knock and the Australia number three added 154 from 166 balls on Saturday, hitting 27 fours and one



RICKY PONTING six as he added 177 for the second wicket with Cox. Ponting is being groomed as a future Australia captain. Australia's

three-Test series against New Zealand starts in Brisbane on November 8.

Australia one-day all-rounder Andrew Symonds underlined his ability to destroy attacks by smashing 75 not out from 43 balls, including six fours and three sixes, to lead Queensland to a six-wicket win over Western Australia in Brisbane.

Resuming at 16 for none on the fourth and final day, Western Australia were all out for 207, an overall lead of 164, after medium-pacers Adam Dale and Michael Kasprovic each took three wickets.

Queensland replied with 166 for four in 27.3 overs to win with 33 balls to spare.

Victoria captain Paul Reiffel declared his team's second innings closed at 211 for seven at Adelaide Oval with Brad Hodge 110 not out after a stylish 140 in the first innings.

South Australia, chasing 209 to win, finished on 179 for five.

Victoria swing bowler Damien Fleming took three for 37 as he pushed his claims for a Test berth next month against New Zealand.

Jr WC final today



AFP, Hobart

India defeated Germany 3-2 and Argentina defeated England 3-1 here Friday to win places in

Sunday's final of the Junior World Cup.

Germany were the architects of their own defeat, conceding a penalty stroke in the second minute and a defensive lapse 20 minutes later to give India a two goal lead. Another goal to India a minute before the break gave India the 3-0 edge.

Germany won the second half with most of the possession, putting pressure on India's defence and winning eight penalty corners. One corner was converted and a field goal with four minutes to play put Germany back in the match, but India defended well and kept out the equaliser.

India played in the final of this tournament in 1997, losing to Australia.

Argentina and England played attacking hockey with honours shared in the first half with a goal apiece. Argentina made more of its chances in the second half, scoring twice in the second half with no reply from England to win 3-1.

Germany and England meet to decide third place on Sunday.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

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Grid for Cryptiquip crossword puzzle

CRYPTOQUIP P Z C D J ' L I S H I A W I Q W D N I R Q Y B I B D G C H F D R I G I A I L W Y P R W D X I W C D J L Z Y S N W L Y P X F W

Yesterdays Cryptiquip: I HAVE NO IDEA HOW THIS UMBRELLA WAS BUILT. IT'S ENTIRELY OVER MY HEAD.

Today's Cryptiquip Clue: I equals E The Cryptiquip is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

World doubles tennis tourney called off

AFP, New Delhi

The ATP world doubles championships, scheduled to be held in India next month, have been cancelled due to security concerns, reports said Saturday.

"Our primary concern is safety for our fans, players, tournament staff and media," said ATP Tour chief executive officer Mark Miles, quoted in Indian newspapers.

The tournament, slated to be held in the southern city of Bangalore from November 7 to 11, was earlier put off in the wake of the terrorist strikes in New York and Washington and the subsequent US reprisals in nearby Afghanistan.

The top eight teams of the world, including last year's runners-up Leander Paes and Mahesh Bhupathi of India, were expected to take part in the 750,000-dollar event.

Doubts over the event arose when the Indian government cancelled the inaugural Afro-Asian Games scheduled for New Delhi in November soon after the September 11 terrorist attacks in the United States.



Chief of Navy Staff Rear Admiral Abu Taher (R) giving away the winner's trophy after the annual athletics championship of Bangladesh Navy held at the Area Sports Complex in Chittagong on Thursday. Hosts BNS Issa Khan team emerged champions in the meet.

Seeds sail into semis



AFP, Zurich

New world number one Jennifer Capriati and American compatriot Lindsay Davenport joined France's Nathalie Tauziat and Jelena Dokic of Yugoslavia in the semifinals of the 1.185-million-dollar WTA tournament here Friday.

Capriati, who took over top spot from Martina Hingis on Monday, eased into the last four with a 6-4, 6-2 win over Switzerland's Marie-Gaiane Mikaelian, who is 105 in the WTA rankings, in 1hr 10mins.

However, a tougher test will come in the semis against world number three Davenport, who bounced back from a poor first set to beat Slovakia's Daniela Hantuchova 3-6, 6-1, 6-1 and book her place in the last four.



Jennifer Capriati of the United States waves to the crowd after winning in the quarterfinals against Swiss Marie-Gaiane Mikaelian at the Swisscom tennis tournament on October 19.

Capriati showed visible signs of fatigue during her quarterfinal match with Mikaelian which belied the kind of triumphant form she displayed in the Australian and French Opens.

"I had a few problems at the start of the match because I was unfamiliar with Mikaelian's game," Capriati explained after her win.

Tauziat, who is 11th in the WTA rankings, overcame compatriot Sandrine Testud but needed two tiebreaks to win 7-6, 7-6 and reach her sixth semifinal out of 16 attempts at Zurich.

The Frenchwoman will meet Yugoslavia's number four seed Jelena Dokic who overcame Silvia Farina Elia of Italy 6-4, 7-6.