

NZ themselves to be blamed

REUTERS, Brisbane
Australian vice-captain Adam Gilchrist said New Zealand let his team off the hook on the second day of their first Test on Friday by playing negatively.

Gilchrist, who finished the rain-interrupted day unbeaten on 88 with Australia in control at 435 for seven, said he had been surprised by the Kiwi tactics.

"They had their tail up and got their breakthroughs yesterday and really had the momentum, but I was really surprised with their attitude from ball one today," Gilchrist said.

"To see them pick up Shane Warne this morning I was surprised they didn't come at us a bit harder and they seemed intent on slowing the over rate and bowl to negative fields... that enabled us to settle in and take our time."

Australia added 141 runs for the loss of one wicket on Friday before rain forced an early end to proceedings at the Gabba.

"I don't think they quite knew where to bowl to Brett," Gilchrist said. "Their bowling has been well planned against most of our batting up to that point."

"I just think he was able to cash in and I think that swung the tempo our way."

Gilchrist, within sight of a fourth Test hundred, said: "I felt very controlled and really pleased that I was able to apply myself and probably discipline myself in that time of need for the team."

"I went against what many people think is my natural aggressive streak."

"I think there's a lot to weigh up tomorrow about whether we should bat on."

"It's good to have 435 on the board. We've scored quickly, if there is rain and eats into our time we still give ourselves a chance of winning the match."

Taxing

FROM PAGE 13
A Municipal official once turned off the water supply in the players' dressing room because we did not give a ticket to his brother-in-law.

"Ministers, bureaucrats, police -- they all want to get in free and take their families and friends along," the official said.

Punjab police officials claim the PCA owes them 8.6 million rupees (180,000 dollars) for providing security during a one-day international against Pakistan in 1999.

PCA officials refuted the charge, saying it was the duty of the police -- not a favour -- to make security arrangements during matches.

The Board of Control for Cricket in India is seeking tax exemption for the International Cricket Council's knockout tournament scheduled to be held in the country next year.

Shoaib vows

FROM PAGE 13
gave the illusion of the ball being thrown during his bowling delivery.

"We will approach the ICC to have a closer look at the medical report given by the Australian experts," the PCB said in a press release.

Shoaib said what saddened him most about the latest report was he had only recently come out of a bad patch and got his rhythm and match fitness back.

He added he had come through controversies about his bowling action before.

"I worked very hard with leading experts of this field in Australia earlier this year and I came through every test," Shoaib said.

"I am very keen to play for Pakistan in the coming months and I want to take part in next year's series against the West Indies, Australia and South Africa firing on all cylinders."

Gilchrist-Lee show



AFP, Brisbane

Adam Gilchrist proved again why he is regarded as one of the world's most explosive batsmen Friday by savaging the New Zealand bowling attack as Australia took charge of the first Test at the Gabba.

Only rain saved the Kiwis from a further Gilchrist mauling but his blistering 88 not out helped ensure Australia were safely positioned at 435 for seven when bad weather ended the second day's play nearly 90 minutes early.

Gilchrist was well supported by fast bowler Brett Lee as they shared an unbeaten eighth-wicket stand of 133 runs.

All of New Zealand's stout-hearted efforts late on Thursday's opening day, when they dismantled the world's strongest batting line-up from 224 without loss to 294 for six at stumps, were undone on Friday.

Stephen Fleming's men claimed the wicket of Shane Warne for 22 to have the Australians 302 for seven early on Day Two.

But in the 29 overs in between rain breaks the home side regained the momentum with Gilchrist and Lee's belligerent stand.

There are few more fearsome sights for opposing sides than to bowl to Gilchrist when he gets set, and his blazing shot-making can turn a match.

Gilchrist was forced to spend a circumspect 56 minutes at the crease late Thursday as wickets tumbled around him but he remained unbeaten on 13 overnight.

The wicketkeeper-batsman then blossomed on Friday, pulverising the Kiwi bowlers with 12 fours and a six to be 12 runs short of his fourth century in his 23rd Test.

"I felt very controlled and I was pleased that I was able to apply myself in that time of need for the team and go against what many think is my natural aggressive streak," Gilchrist said.

Nearing tea Gilchrist was almost out on 85 when his skied hook shot just failed to carry to a diving Matthew Bell in the deep off Craig McMillan.

Gilchrist received tremendous support from Lee, who was just two runs short of his highest Test score of 62, compiled in last season's corresponding Test here against the West Indies.

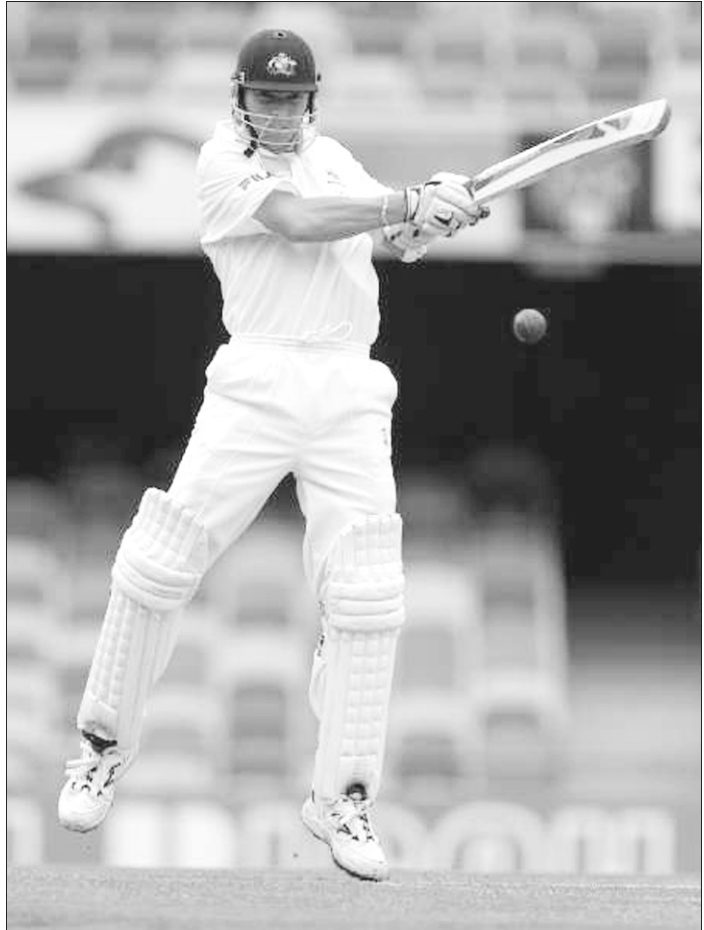
Lee, who had averaged 130 in his only three previous innings at bat in Australia, relished the New Zealand bowling, with a six off Chris Cairns a highlight of his 87-ball display.

Australia's brisk scoring, 3.6 runs per over, has given the world champions the opportunity of victory, even allowing for the time already lost through the bad weather.

Cairns, who suffered overnight and throughout Friday from an upset stomach, finished the day with the figures of 3-123 off 31 overs after claiming Warne, who was caught cutting by Mathew Sinclair at backward square leg.

Play will start 30 minutes earlier than scheduled Saturday but the

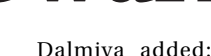
Table with 5 columns: Player, Runs, Wickets, etc. Includes Cairns, Waugh, Swaugh, Martyn, Gilchrist, Warne, Lee, Extras, Total, Fall of wickets.



An airborne Brett Lee executes a square-cut during his unbeaten 60 on the second day of the Gabba Test yesterday.

Scoreboard table with columns: Player, O, M, R, W. Includes Cairns, Nash, O'Connor, Vettori, Astle, McMillan, Umpires.

Dalmiya warns Wright



AFP, New Delhi

India's cricket chief said coach John Wright and his management team would be asked to explain the side's inconsistency after the current tour of South Africa.

"If they don't have the talent, one can understand they are trying and it's not happening. But they definitely have the talent," Jagmohan Dalmiya, president of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), told reporters on Friday.

His comments came after the team slumped to a nine-wicket defeat to South Africa inside four days in the first Bloemfontein Test.

His criticism, while expressed in general terms, will put the focus back on Wright, appointed India's first foreign coach last year, after recent poor performances away from home.

Dalmiya, who took over as the BCCI president in September, last month asked the New Zealander to produce a written explanation for recent poor performances abroad as well as a spate of injuries to key players.

The BCCI chief said Wright and Australian Andrew Leips, the team's physical trainer, had sent in their reports from South Africa and the issues would be thoroughly analysed on their return.

Dalmiya said the selectors had told him the team management did

not inform them about the players' injuries, or why a player was not given a chance to play, or why so many changes were made in the batting order.

Reports from South Africa said the team had sought a replacement for injured wicketkeeper Sameer Dige, but board secretary Niranjan Shah remained in the dark.

Dalmiya said that the team management should communicate better with the board and selectors after tours.

Wright took over in November last year, leading India to a 2-1 upset win over Australia in a three-Test home series early this year after helping them claim a two-Test home series against Zimbabwe.

But the former New Zealand Test captain has been criticised after India were held 1-1 in a two-Test series in Zimbabwe and then lost 2-1 a three-Test series in Sri Lanka in August-September.

That series was also marred by the absence of leading batsmen Sachin Tendulkar and Vangipurappu Laxman besides left-arm paceman Ashish Nehra because of injuries.

In Bloemfontein, India amassed 372 for seven on the opening day before things went on the slide in the first match of the three-Test series.

NSW driven by Bevan

AFP, Melbourne

Michael Bevan steered New South Wales to within three runs of innings points against Victoria in their Sheffield Shield cricket game here Friday.

The Blues were 257 for five at stumps after the second day and poised for points after Victoria were all out for 259 before lunch.

Bevan, with a top score of 116, and Brad Haddin (15) were the not-out batsmen, while 20-year-old Michael Clarke again showed his potential with a well-crafted 111.

Victoria resumed at 221 for six and only lasted another 13 overs, Ian Harvey pot scoring with 74 and Nathan Bracken (4-76) and Stuart MacGill (4-71) the only bowlers used Friday.

In Hobart, Sean Clingeffer emerged as the youngest jewel in Australia's rich reservoir of batting wicketkeepers when he hit an unbeaten 141 for Tasmania against South Australia.

The 21-year-old's big innings boosted Tasmania to 382 for seven before a mid-afternoon declaration.

By stumps on the second day, South Australia had replied with a spirited 108 for one, with Greg Blewett 45 and Darren Lehmann 31.

However the South Australians may have lost opener Jeff Vaughan, who had to be helped from the field after being felled by a rearing David Saker delivery that crashed into his visor.

Manager Andrew Sincock said he would only bat Saturday if he had a comfortable night.

In Perth, Queensland opening batsmen Jimmy Maher and Jerry Cassell gave their side a flying start with an unbroken 157-run stand in 210 minutes in the clash against Western Australia at the WACA Ground.

Cassell (80 not out) thumped eight fours and Maher (69) collected nine boundaries as the visitors made 157 without loss as they vigorously set about chasing Western Australia's first innings 432.

The Queenslanders found running just as comfortable as the Western Australian tailenders earlier in the day as former Test fast bowlers Jo Angel (61) and Matthew Nicholson (59 not out) added another 127 runs to make their ninth-wicket partnership worth 129.

Paceman Ashley Noffke collected one more scalp to finish with a creditable haul of 5-103.

Harper admits his mistake

REUTERS, Brisbane

Cricketer Daryl Harper has admitted making a mistake which allowed Australian batsman Justin Langer to post a century in the first Test with New Zealand.

Harper gave the Australian opener the benefit of the doubt after he was struck on the pads by Chris Cairns in the first over of the match on Thursday.

Langer went on to make 104 and put on 224 for the first wicket with Matthew Hayden before Australia moved on to 435 for seven at the end of the second day.

But the Kiwis were adamant Langer should have been dismissed for a duck and Harper later admitted he supported their view after seeing a television replay of the incident which suggested the ball would have hit middle stump.

"I don't think you need to be a Rhodes Scholar to have a look at the replay and see what happened," Harper told Australian radio on Friday.

"Unfortunately there are a lot of things in cricket, whether you're a batsman, bowler, fielder or umpire, that you would like to pass over and move on to the next delivery -- it looks like that was one of them."

France, Russia roll on



AFP, Madrid

ened Argentina 3-0. The absence of top player Paola Suarez, who suffered an ankle injury in Munich, undoubtedly cost Argentina.

Russian Nadia Petrova eased past Clarissa Fernandez 6-4, 6-3, with Olympic silver medalist Elena Dementieva wasting no time dismissing Maria Emilia Salerni 6-1, 6-2 in just 49 minutes.

Doubles duo Elena Likhovtseva and Elena Bovina completed the

"I'm going to play Mauresmo. We've played twice and I've lost both times. It will be an interesting match."

Germany were defeated 3-0 by Belgium in their opening Pool B tie, and Australia went down 3-0 to Spain, so both needed a win to keep in the race.

Blanka Lamade, 19, defeated Australian Alicia Molik 7-6, 7-5, and team-mate Barbara Rittner stole herself through a 2hr 09min battle against Nicole Pratt before coming away with a 4-6, 6-3, 7-5 win.

In the doubles Martina Muller and Scarlett Werner similarly rallied to defeat Rachel McQuillan and Pratt 4-6, 6-2, 6-4.

"It was a bit tough out there," said Pratt. "Losing to the Spanish wasn't a good start but we had a chance to get a win today."

Rittner came back from 1-4 down in the third set with Pratt holding a break point to go 5-1.

"I always thought that I was in the match and could win here," said the German. "I had a feeling that she (Pratt) was getting a bit tired."

Germany were called in to replace the United States, who declined due to security fears, and 28-year-old Rittner said that with three Fed Cup novices they were taking the chance to lay the foundations for their future team.

"I'm the oldest member of the team and we didn't expect to have a chance against Belgium so we wanted to give young players a chance for the next Fed Cup," said Rittner, ranked 69 in the world.

Earlier, Mauresmo and Sandrine Testud secured a win for France in their opening tie which eliminated the Czech Republic.

Mauresmo ousted Denisa Chladkova 6-2, 7-5 and Testud saw off Kveta Hrdlickova 6-4, 6-1. Testud then paired up with Natalie Tauziat to hammer Czech teenaged Petra Cetkovska and Elena Vaskova 6-3, 6-2 in the doubles.

"We're ready to attack and have come here determined to win," said 29-year-old Testud, a member of the team which lifted France's only Fed Cup title in 1997.

Mauresmo, with her right thigh strapped after an injury scare earlier in the week, brushed aside Chladkova in 78 minutes.

"I felt good on court and didn't want to go into a third set. In this format of competition, if you want to win it you have to do it quickly," said the 21-year-old.

In the absence of 17-time champions the USA the title is up for grabs and Mauresmo feels France can seize the opportunity.

"It's their (USA) fault that they're not here and didn't want to play. We have to take that chance. First step towards doing that is to get into the final Sunday," she added.

But Spain are also considered challengers to win a sixth title at home along with Belgium who have two top ten players to count on in Henin and Clijsters.

"Given the surface, it's not sure that Belgium will beat Spain," admitted Tauziat, a veteran of 15 French Fed Cup campaigns.

Spain and Belgium are neck and neck on top of Pool B. Spain play Germany Friday and Belgium take on Australia.

The tournament is being played using a round-robin format within two pools with the nation finishing at the top of each pool after three ties going through to contest Sunday's final.



Amelie Mauresmo of France celebrates her victory over Czech Republic's Denisa Chladkova at the Fed Cup on November 9.

seven time winners, saw their campaigns bite the dust after their second consecutive losses ruled them both out of the title chase.

Russian whitewash of the South Americans downing Laura Montalvo and Salemi 7-6, 6-7, 6-4.

France and Russia meet Friday in their Pool A tie and Dementieva should have extra motivation ahead of her clash with Amelie Mauresmo.

"It was good preparation for me today. It's going to be tough to play the French," admitted world number 15 Dementieva.

Hsieh advances



AFP, Pattaya

games. She struggled in the second set as Vakulenko struck the ball more positively, but the teenager proved the fitter player in the final stages of the one-hour-and-52-minute battle, winning the last four games.

Another qualifier, South African Leisel Huber, recovered from losing the first five games of the match to upset sixth-seed Ai Sugiyama of Japan 7-5, 6-2.

Sugiyama held two set points in the first set but became tentative as Huber fought her way into the match. The Japanese then collapsed after holding three points to level at 3-3 in the second set, winning just one of the next 14 points.

Hsieh will challenge eighth-seeded Rossana de los Rios from Paraguay, who beat Wynne Prakusya of Indonesia 6-2, 7-6.

Taiwan's 15-year-old Hsieh Su-Wei continued her astonishing run Thursday at the WTA tournament in Pattaya with a three-set defeat of Ukrainian Julia Vakulenko to earn a quarterfinal berth.

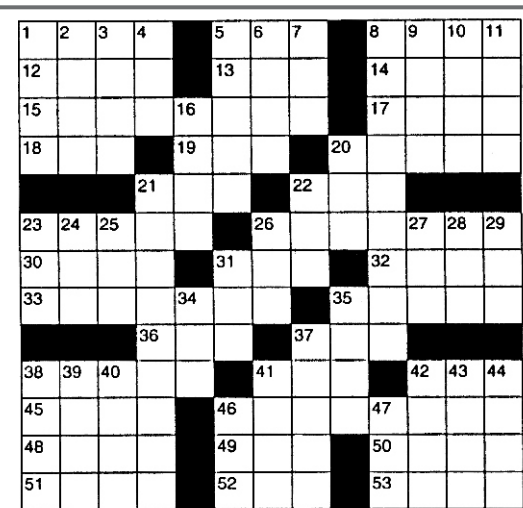
Hsieh's 7-5, 1-6, 6-2 win was her 37th victory in 38 matches during her first year of senior competition on the international women's tour.

Her only defeat this year came in the semi-finals of the Wismilak International in Bali in September, to Indonesian's Wimbledon junior champion Angelique Widjaja.

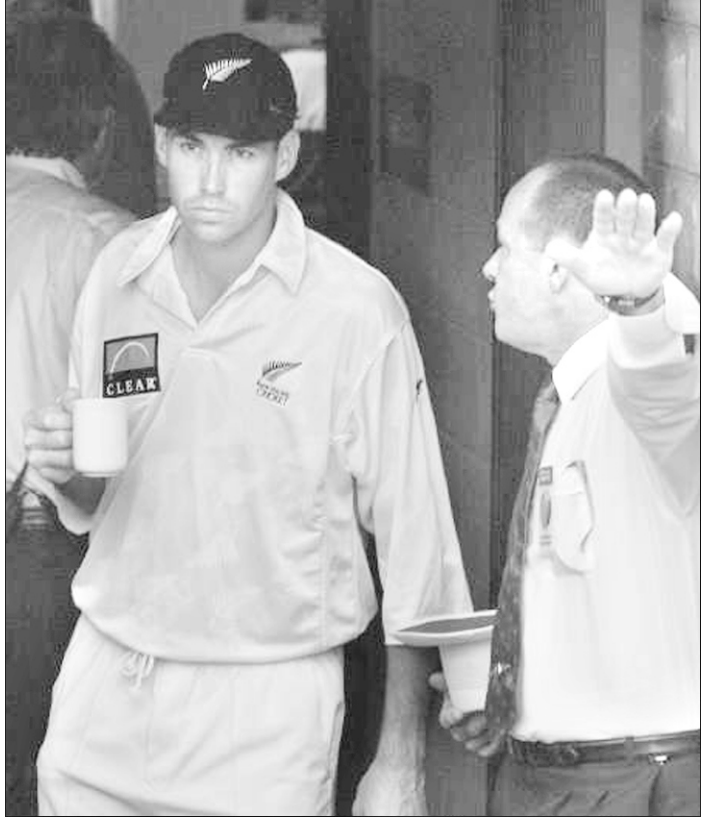
Hsieh, who won five consecutive ITF Challenger events this year, trailed 3-5 in the opening set, but then reeled off four straight

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS 1 Wound cover 5 Common-est English word 8 Sitarist's rendition 12 Actress Anderson 13 Method 14 Mr. Stravinsky 15 Recent 17 Metric unit 18 "Golly!" 19 Inseparable 20 Suspicious 21 Journey segment 22 Islander's home 23 Burlap fibers 26 African herd 30 "I didn't know!" 31 Two, in Tijuana 32 Use a paper towel 33 Fortified place 35 Flustered



CRYPTOQUIP I U Y Z K U J I M U I Y X Z I J M G W Y D U H U I C ' W U K K G D Z M U U Q : " W U Q Q C , N Z ' Q Z D H U Y X Z M K U O N G I Y Z Q . " Yesterday's Cryptogram: WHY IS IT THAT A LAWYER'S FOUR-THOUSAND-PAGE LEGAL REPORT CAN BE CALLED A "BRIEF"? Today's Cryptogram Clue: Y equals T The Cryptogram 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.



Kiwi captain Stephen Fleming (L) chats with umpire Daryl Harper during a rain-delay on Day Two of the first Test between Australia and New Zealand at the Gabba yesterday.