



England captain Nasser Hussain is all set to play a sweep-shot against India A on the third and final day of their tour match in Jaipur yesterday.

# England boost morale

Cricket

AFP, Jaipur

England warmed for next week's first Test against India with a three-wicket victory on the third and final day of their last practice match here on Thursday.

The tourists, needing 173 to win, survived a minor scare late in the innings to lose seven wickets before beating India A at the Saiwai Man Singh Stadium.

Captain Naseer Hussain top-scored with an impressive 59 to drive home the advantage given by seamers Craig White and Andrew Flintoff early in the day.

White and Flintoff shared five wickets as the hosts, starting the day at 75-3, lost their remaining seven wickets for 34 runs.

White, returning from an injury, grabbed two quick scalps to finish with 5-31, his 10th haul of five or more wickets in first-class cricket.

The 31-year-old Yorkshire all-rounder was on a hat-trick when he removed Rashmi Parida and Ajay Ratra off successive deliveries.

Reetinder Sodhi prevented it from happening, but could not continue batting after being struck on the hand by a White delivery.

# Anand bounces back

Chess

AFP, Moscow

India's Viswanathan Anand, holder of the FIDE world chess champion's title, gained revenge Wednesday for his shock defeat by a rank outsider in the first round of the 2001-2002 championship, beating Frenchman Olivier Touzane in under two hours.

However, the FIDE World Chess Championship had several other surprises in store, as another little-known player, China's Zhang Pengxiang, ousted former chess world champion Anatoly Karpov in the first round.

Touzane, ranked last of the 128 contestants meeting in the Kremlin's Palace of Congresses for the knock-out competition, pulled off a major upset by defeating Anand, ranked first, with the black pieces on Tuesday.

Anand, who won the FIDE (World Chess Federation) title in Teheran last year, fought back to

## CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

**ACROSS**

- Shake-spearan seplet
- Sample the sherry
- Unprepared
- "How — the little busy bee ..."
- Fuss "out"
- Discourteous
- Lab assistant of film
- Kurosawa classic
- Cornfield intruder
- Modifying the color
- Tangles
- Extinct
- New Zealander
- Acapulco gold
- Pad-locked fastener
- Overcome
- Ostrich's kin
- Sp. Mrs. Slangy

**DOWN**

- Mine entrance
- Disco syle
- Harrow rival
- Seafood selection
- Seaweed-rich sea
- Rhoda's mom
- Vintage video-game
- Legend-ary jockey
- Encircle
- Item for Indiana Jones
- Emulates
- Betsy Ross
- Trudge
- Hitchcock movie
- Jog
- Brain-storm
- Batu's bailiwick
- Diminutive suffix
- Honest politician

**19 "Forget it!"**

**21 Artesian appellation**

**24 "For — a jolly ..."**

**25 —**

**26 Darya vessel**

**28 Grecian "Mad Monk"**

**30 Kvetch-ary**

**31 Your court-room props**

**37 Compass pt.**

**38 See coming**

**41 Exist**

**42 Trudge**

**43 Hitchcock movie**

**44 Jog**

**46 Brain-storm**

**47 Batu's bailiwick**

**48 Diminutive suffix**

**51 Honest politician**

**SOLUTIONS:** 1. SHAKESPEARE, 2. SAMPLE, 3. UNPREPARED, 4. HOWL, 5. FUSS, 6. DISCOURTEOUS, 7. LAB ASSISTANT, 8. KUROSAWA, 9. CORNFIELD, 10. MODIFY, 11. TANGLES, 12. EXTINCT, 13. ZEALANDER, 14. ACAPULCO, 15. PADLOCK, 16. OVERCOME, 17. OSTRICH, 18. SP. MRS., 19. FORGET IT, 20. ARTESIAN, 21. APPELLATION, 22. HAWTHORNE, 23. HAWTHORNE, 24. FOR A JOLLY, 25. A, 26. DARYA, 27. GREEK, 28. GREEK, 29. MAD MONK, 30. KVETCH, 31. COURTROOM, 32. COMPASS, 33. POINT, 34. SEE, 35. COMING, 36. EXIST, 37. TRUDGE, 38. HITCHCOCK, 39. MOVIE, 40. JOG, 41. BRAINSTORM, 42. BATU, 43. BAILIWK, 44. DIMINUTIVE, 45. SUFFIX, 46. HONEST, 47. POLITICIAN.

**CRYPTOQUIP**

Today's Cryptiquip Clue: V equals S

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.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11

12 13 14

15 16 17

18 19 20 21

22 23

24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31

32 33 34

35 36 37 38

39 40 41

42 43 44 45 46 47 48

49 50 51 52

53 54 55

56 57 58

GH U BUGZ XH VJUSFV

UZ F HG QW L G J Q , A X

NXR LWGJS LWFN EGQWL

WGVY UJA EUSF RB ?

Yesterday's Cryptiquip: WHEN THE DOG UNWITTINGLY SAT ON SANDPAPER, I HEARD IT YELL "RUFF!"

# DAVIS CUP DIARY

Tennis

AP, Melbourne

The last time France and Australia met in a Davis Cup tennis final French player Cedric Pioline cried after losing the decisive singles match to Australian Mark Philippoussis in Nice in 1999.

This time around, he hopes any tears are ones of happiness.

"I hope I'm going to cry again, but in a different way," Pioline, who will partner Fabrice Santoro in Saturday's doubles match, said Thursday after the draw. "I'll be the most happy man in the world."

Pioline and Santoro are scheduled to play Australians Todd Woodbridge and Wayne Arthurs, although team captains John Fitzgerald of Australia and Guy Forget of France have until an hour before Saturday's match to make changes.

## TAKE MY ARM, PLEASE

Australia's Pat Rafter figures speculation about the tendinitis in his arm has gotten out of control in the days leading up to his opening singles match on Friday against Sebastian Grosjean of France. So on Thursday, he decided to add fuel to the fire, very much tongue in cheek. When asked whether he felt confident his arm would hold up for his opening match, Rafter replied: "I don't know. I am going straight from here for an operation to remove the arm, and put on a prosthetic limb. It's going to be interesting."

Rafter said he finds all the talk about his injury "very amusing."

"I was sitting down having a massage beside Lleyton (Hewitt) the other day and we just started laughing. I find it very entertaining."

## COURTING PROBLEMS

French captain Guy Forget, who was critical of the portable grass court at Rod Laver Arena, saying he didn't think it was standing up to the wear and tear of practice, decided to change his tack Thursday. "It's a fair court, you know," Forget said. "It was beautiful when we first came and day after day it seems like it's deteriorating. Big pieces go off and I don't know if it will affect the quality of the play within the next few days. But I would rather concentrate on the match itself than think about the court."

## ON THE SIDELINES

When Australia last won a Davis Cup final at home in 1986 at Melbourne's Kooyong Australian captain John Fitzgerald teamed with Pat Cash to beat the Swedish doubles duo of Stefan Edberg and Anders Jarryd en route to a 3-2 Australian victory. Fifteen years later, he's not sure whether it will be easier watching from the sidelines. "I'm yet to find out, but it's certainly different to actually being out there," Fitzgerald said Thursday. "When you are running around you can relieve the tension, and the energy you give off relieves it for you. But when you sit there in the chair you feel very different. It's a strange comparison."

# Fletcher hails White, Flintoff

Cricket

REUTERS, Jaipur

England coach Duncan Fletcher praised the pace bowling of Craig White and Andrew Flintoff after they set up a three-wicket win over India A team.

White returned to form with five for 31, four days before the Test series against India starts, and Fletcher said: "He has started to bowl genuine pace."

"We were certainly concerned he had not bowled for some time. The more he bowled the stronger he got."

The Yorkshire all-rounder's bowling for most of the last English season was below par because of a back injury. Coming into the Indian tour without much match practice, he found it difficult to bowl at full pace on slow tracks in the first two games.

Fletcher said Flintoff's performance -- he had a six-wicket match haul and scored a useful 40 -- was a major boost after he arrived in India as back-up for White two days ago.

"He bowled quick, lot of pace, which was exciting to see and he just showed what kind of a dangerous batter he can be," the coach said.

Fletcher said he was worried Flintoff did not have enough time to settle down, but thought he showed his confidence through his all-round efforts.

The England coach was happy his team put in a steady effort on the final day, first bowling out the opposition for 109 in their second innings and then batting steadily.

"Today was the first day we didn't play in patches," he said. Fletcher criticised the pitches for England's three warm-up games, saying the first two in Bombay and Hyderabad were flat while the Jaipur track made batting very difficult.

"It wasn't a good pitch to bat on. I believe true wickets are really good for preparation," he said, criticising the uneven bounce on the green wicket.

But he ruled out lodging any complaint with the Indian cricket board, saying the pitch was the same for both teams in Jaipur.

Fletcher acknowledged his team were distracted by the rumpus over the selection of banned Indian batsman Virender Sehwag for the first Test in Mohali starting on Monday.

"That's the kind of distraction which got us a win, I hope more distraction will get us more wins," he said jokingly, but added that the issue did figure in discussions among the players.

He said his team's job was to concentrate on the tough series ahead, adding that it would be guided by the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) in the matter.

Sehwag is ineligible to play after receiving a one-match ban from match referee Mike Denness for excessive appealing during India's recent second Test in South Africa.

The batsman was one of six Indians sanctioned by Denness, causing outrage in India and leading to his being banned from officiating in the third Test.

That game was subsequently stripped of Test status by the International Cricket Council (ICC), but India claim it was an official match and, as Sehwag did not play, he has therefore served his suspension.

# Flemo sniffs

FROM PAGE 13

batsmen with the series on the line.

"If you can't stand up to that sort of physical stuff, they will certainly be found wanting in a Test match," Waugh said.

"I think it really Tests the courage element out in Perth, it's bouncy, quick and there's going to be a lot more balls at the body."

New Zealand have made two changes, dropping opening batsman Matthew Bell for debutant Lou Vincent and replacing injured seamer Daryl Tuffey with Chris Martin.

Australia boast an unchanged line-up for the series but Waugh admits his middle order, including himself, is out of form.

Mark Waugh (0 and 12), Steve Waugh (3 and 0) and Damien Martyn (4 and 0) had suffered from poor shot selection and had no excuses, the captain said.

"We hope we can rectify that sooner rather than later," Waugh said.

Waugh said his team had been looking forward to the coming three-Test series at home and away against South Africa, but that had not affected their preparations for the third Test against the Kiwis.

Australia have not lost a series at home since Allan Border's side went down 2-1 to West Indies in 1992-93.

New Zealand have not beaten Australia in a series in Australia for 16 years but Fleming said he was confident all-rounder Chris Cairns, among others, was capable of

turning the series.

He said Mark Butcher's 173 not out in the fourth Ashes Test in August and Vangipurappu Laxman's 281 in the second Test in India in March were examples of how Australia could be beaten.

"We've seen Australia be beaten twice recently by two guys who played out of their skin, Mark Butcher and Laxman in India," Fleming said.

"I think in the New Zealand side there are some areas which we can't match it with the Australians but I do think there's a match-winner amongst us, maybe two."

"When it comes down to one game, the beauty of it is, it could be this game. We're extremely excited."

Australia's pace attack of Glenn McGrath, who has taken only three wickets in the first two Tests, Brett Lee and Jason Gillespie were combining nicely and would give the Kiwis plenty of problems, Waugh said.

## TEAMS

**AUSTRALIA:** Steve Waugh (captain), Matthew Hayden, Justin Langer, Ricky Ponting, Mark Waugh, Damien Martyn, Adam Gilchrist, Brett Lee, Shane Warne, Jason Gillespie, Glenn McGrath.

**NEW ZEALAND:** Stephen Fleming (captain), Mark Richardson, Lou Vincent, Mathew Sinclair, Nathan Astle, Craig McMillan, Chris Cairns, Adam Parore, Daniel Vettori, Chris Martin, Shane Bond.



Australian Pat Rafter (L), who is still ill at ease, apparently thinks of his prospect of playing against France in the Davis Cup final while teammate Lleyton Hewitt looks on at the Melbourne Park yesterday.

# Hewitt-Escude opener

Tennis

AP, Melbourne

Lleyton Hewitt's rise to the top of world tennis rankings this year came with a few bumps along the way. One of them was a disappointing fourth-round loss to France's Nicolas Escude at Wimbledon.

On Friday, the 20-year-old Australian will get a chance to atone for that defeat when he plays Escude in the opening singles match of the Davis Cup final on a portable grass court at Rod Laver Arena.

Hewitt, who has been nearly unbeatable in the last three months, winning the US Open and the Masters Cup two weeks ago in Sydney and taking over the world No. 1 ranking, says he didn't play that well in the Wimbledon match, losing 4-6, 6-4, 6-3, 4-6, 6-4.

"He's a really good grass player, although it did go down to 6-4 in the fifth," said Hewitt, who has a 2-2 career record against Escude.

"I know that the way that I've been playing over the last few months I'm playing a lot better now. But I know I'm going to have to play a lot better than I did that day if I'm going to win tomorrow."

Escude hopes his upset of the

fifth-seeded Hewitt at Wimbledon will give him a psychological edge.

"A lot has happened since Wimbledon, but yes, I think that will give me some confidence," said Escude. "I feel very good about myself and about my chances."

Pat Rafter, trying to overcome tendinitis in his right arm, was declared fit to play just before the draw and will take on French No. 1 Sebastian Grosjean in the second singles match Friday.

"I expect it will be classic grass-court tennis," said Rafter, discounting claims by French team captain Guy Forget on Wednesday that the portable court is pockmarked and is not holding up to heavy play.

Rafter also rejected claims that the longer the match went, the more it might favor the fitter Grosjean.

"Again, it's grass-court tennis," said Rafter. "It's not as grueling as the Rebound Ace is, so I would like to think that won't be the case."

Rafter and Grosjean last met two weeks ago in the Masters Cup in Sydney, with Grosjean winning in two sets, evening their career head-to-head meetings after Rafter beat the Frenchman on hard courts at Miami last year.

On Saturday, Cedric Pioline and Fabrice Santoro will play the Australian combination of Todd Woodbridge and Wayne Arthurs,

although team captains John Fitzgerald of Australia and Forget will have until an hour before the match to make changes.

On Sunday in the reverse singles, Hewitt will play Grosjean and Rafter is scheduled to play Escude. Hewitt has the recent edge in that matchup, having beaten Grosjean twice in the Masters Cup and holds a 5-2 career edge.

Rafter has never lost to Escude in four previous meetings.

Forget said the French face a tough task and plan to be aggressive.

"You have to go for it," said Forget. "You don't beat players like Hewitt and Rafter by waiting for a mistake. They can be beaten, but only if you take a lot of risks. You won't do it by being timid."

Australia goes into the match with 17 wins in 23 Davis Cup finals played at home -- the first in 1908 against the United States and the most recent in 1986 when they beat Sweden.

It is the third year in a row that Australia has advanced to the final, having beaten the French at Nice in 1999 on clay and then losing to Spain last year in Barcelona. France beat the Netherlands in the semifinals this year while Australia defeated Sweden.

# Coughlin rules the pool

Swimming

AP, New York

Natalie Coughlin set a world short-course record in the 100-metre breaststroke at the FINA World Cup.

The 19-year-old University of California sophomore broke the world mark Wednesday, finishing in 57.08 seconds in the 25-metre pool. Less than an hour later, Coughlin set an American record of 25.83 in the 50 butterfly.

Coughlin set a world record in the 200 backstroke Tuesday and finished the meet with four gold medals and a silver in five events.

Coughlin's performance proves she has fully recovered from a left shoulder injury.

"I knew that the 100 back was my strongest event," Coughlin said. "While I didn't make it, I was happy with the way I overtook Brooke (Hanson)." Hanson, of Australia, finished in 31.27.

"My coach (Terry McKeever) was even more positive. He kept telling me that I'd do it. I felt real strong."

"I am just having fun and that's getting me through it. I went out like it was a 50 and brought it home."

Coughlin broke the backstroke record of 58.45, set March 3 by Japan's Mai Nakamura.

Coughlin admitted she was not after the record in the butterfly.

"I really wasn't thinking about it," Coughlin said. "That was just a fun race for me. Sure, I have two world records now, but really, it really hasn't set in. Of the two, however, the 200 is the bigger surprise."

Martina Moravcova of Slovakia won the 100 freestyle in 54.04, her fourth victory of the meet. She set a meet record in the 200 freestyle, on opening night.

China's Luo Xuejuan, intent on breaking the world record in the 50 breaststroke, settled for a meet record of 30.68.

"The world record was my goal," Luo said of the 30.60 mark. "While I didn't make it, I was happy with the way I overtook Brooke (Hanson)." Hanson, of Australia, finished in 31.27.

Neil Walker of Austin, Texas, won the 50 backstroke in 24.42 and the

100 backstroke in 1:56.38, giving him four medals in the meet.

"I am really pleased that I'm getting back into top condition," said Walker, returning to competition after taking time off to get married.

"Last March, I set the 50 world record (23.42), and what I have done here these last two days is a stepping stone for me."

World record holder Ed Moses, a gold and silver medalist in the 2000 Olympics, won the 100 freestyle in 1:00.14, his second victory of the meet.

Jason Lezak picked up his second victory of the competition, winning the 50 free in 21.86.

"I stuck my head in and just dug down on every stroke," Lezak said. "I have been working on my walls, and it helped."

Bartosz Kizierowski of Poland was second in 21.96.

Anne Poleska set a German record in winning the 200 breaststroke in 2:22.90. She beat Olympic bronze medalist Amanda Beard, who finished in 2:24.56.

# Pepsi h'ball begins today

BSS, Dhaka

The Pepsi 14th National Handball Championship (men and women) organised by Bangladesh Handball Federation (BHF) begins at different venues today.

Speaking at a news conference here yesterday, BHF president Lt. Col (ret) MA Hamid said in all 58 districts including 30 in women's group would take part in four zones.

The zones are: Dhaka (men and women), Jessore (men), Narail (women) and Rangpur (men and women).

The final round will take place in Dhaka in January next year. The defending champions and runners-up, Education Board, Dhaka University, the services teams will take part in the final round directly.



Washington Wizards Christian Laettner (L) loses both his mouth guard and the ball after being hit by Philadelphia 76ers' Allen Iverson during their NBA fixture at Philadelphia on November 28.

# Cricketers

FROM PAGE 13

Bashar, Aminul Islam, Javed Omar, Mohammad Ashraf, Al-Shahriar, Enamul Haque, Hasibul Hossain, Monjurul Islam, Mohammad Sharif, Khaled Mahmud, Fahim Muntasir, Tushar Imran, Mashrafi-bin-Mortuza and Sanwar Hossain.