

Japan Open
Lee's

AFP, Tokyo

Lee Hyun-II became the first Korean to win the Japan Open badminton tournament Sunday by beating world number one Xie Xuanze of China in the men's singles final for the biggest title of his career.

The eighth-ranked South Korean, the runner-up last year here, unleashed an array of lightning smashes in the final game to go up to 3-0 on his way to a stunning 5-7, 7-5, 0-7, 7-5, 7-2 victory over the Asian champion.

"I knew that no Korean player has ever won the singles here. I'm really happy that I became the first Korean to it, and I'm really happy to win such a big tournament," Lee said after the 59-minute final.

Lee made a couple of easy errors to be whitewashed the third game, and then soon found himself going down 1-4 and 2-5 in the fourth game from where he staged a remarkable comeback.

"Xia is a tough opponent, he is speedy. He has more speed than I have. Although he seemed to have the momentum, I just tried not to make a mistake and tried to send the shuttle to the back court to make him run," said Lee.

"In the fourth game, he seemed to be tired, so it worked pretty well. That's why I started to attack early in the fifth game to take a lead."

"I've been playing so bad in the Swiss Open and All England and I was in a very bad mood coming into this tournament. But I started to feel better and better as it went on. I hope I can keep the momentum for the next event."

"By playing tournaments, we are preparing for the Asian Games in Pusan. I've already been named for the Games. And my biggest goal is the Athens Olympics. I'm going to do my best to qualify for the Olympics. Hopefully I can win the gold medal," said Lee.

It was only his second title in the Grand Prix series, following his victory at the US Open in September last year.

It was also his first win over Xia after losing their previous three matches, including a first-round loss two years ago here.

Lee, who will turn 22 in 10 days, received an early birthday gift of the 14,400-dollar first prize.

The women's singles title and 12,420 dollars went to defending champion Zhou Mi, who trounced Dai Yun 7-1, 7-0, 7-1 in an all-Chinese final in only 23 minutes.

Record alert for WC rivals



REUTERS, Port Elizabeth

Australian captain Ricky Ponting admitted his side had 'thrown caution to the wind' at the start of their world record run chase to win the sixth one-day international against South Africa.

Australia reached 330-7 to win by three wickets, overhauling South Africa's 326 for three - their highest score against Australia - with five balls to spare.

The previous record for a successful run chase by a side batting second was 316, achieved by India against Pakistan in Dhaka in 1997-98 and Australia themselves against Pakistan in Lahore in 1998-99.

"We threw caution to the wind, took the challenge head on and got over the line," Ponting said afterwards. "I'd be lying if I said we were confident of winning."

"We had nothing to lose so we just went out there, backed ourselves and played our shots."

"We had a bit of luck along the way which we were always going to need to chase that many. But the way we approached it was outstanding."

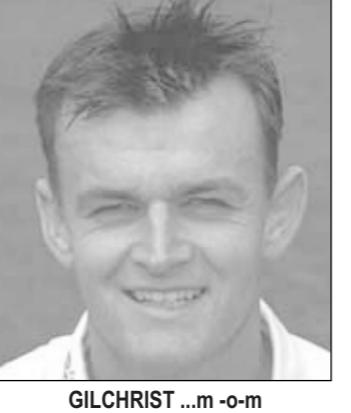
He added: "It's probably the best game or chase I've ever been involved in. We had a similar one in Pakistan where we chased 316 and again we got off to a flying start and reeled them in."

"Today was a bit the same - to reach our 50 in the fifth over was an amazing start and the middle order guys just kept it at about six an over

and didn't have to take too many risks to do it."

Despite the remarkable victory, the Australian captain stressed there was still plenty of room for improvement for his side.

"We've done plenty wrong, don't worry about that. For a side to score 326 against our attack we must



GILCHRIST ...m o-m

have done a lot of things wrong. They scored 100 off the last 10 overs which was disappointing again. Today we were good enough to get ourselves out of trouble and that was pleasing."

With one match to play Australia are 5-0 up.

SCOREBOARD

Final scorecard of the sixth one-day international between South Africa and Australia at St George's Park here on Saturday:

SOUTHAFRICA

Gibbs c b Harvey 37
Smith c Lehmann b Warne 84
Boje b Lehmann 47
Kallis not out 80
Rhodes not out 71

Score: Australia won by 3 wickets

Man-of-match

Adam Gilchrist

Series: Australia lead 5-0

Umpires: Ian Howell, Shahid Wadhwala (SA).

TV umpire: Karl Hurter (SA).

Match referee: Cammie Smith (West Indies).

Remaining match: Cape Town, April 9

Fall of wickets: 1-81, 2-93, 3-104, 4-287, 5-312, 6-312, 7-326

BOWLING

O M R W

Pollock 8 0 57 0
Ntini 9.1 0 83 1
Telemachus 10 0 48 2
Kallis 10 0 59 2

Boje 6 0 34 0
Kent 2 0 16 0
Smith 4 0 24 1

Fall of wickets: 1-24, 2-41, 3-49, 4-56, 5-63, 6-70, 7-77, 8-84, 9-91

Bowler

O M R W

Tarigul 4 0 20 0
Debabroto 5 0 29 1
Tariq 6 2 7 2
Tahmim 8.4 3 22 4

Monirul 8 0 23 1
Shahriar 8 0 31 0

Fall of wickets: 1-9, 2-49, 3-50, 4-68, 5-70, 6-72, 7-79, 8-104, 9-112

TODAY'S HIGHLIGHTS



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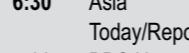
STAR WORLD: 8:00 & 11:30p.m. Boston Public



Boston Public explores the personal and professional lives of teachers and administrators working at a mid-size high school. In tonight's episode, Rehearsals are in full swing for the annual charity show. Marilyn is dismayed to learn that the main skit the students have prepared is a spoof of Winslow High faculty.



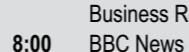
STAR MOVIES: 7:00p.m. Addams Family Reunion. Gomez and Morticia are horrified to discover that Grandpa and Grandma Addams have a rare disease that is slowly turning them "normal". The only chance they have of curing them is to organise a family reunion, hoping that someone knows a home remedy.



PICK OF THE DAY



The Adventures of Rocky and Bullwinkle



On HBO at 10:00p.m. Rocky and Bullwinkle have been living off the finances made from the reruns of their cartoon show. Boris and Natasha somehow manage to crossover into reality and team up with Fearless Leader, an evil criminal turned media mogul with some evil plans up his sleeve.



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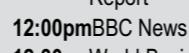
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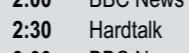
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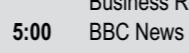
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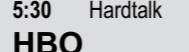
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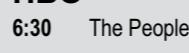
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