

Warne back in Vic hot seat

AFP, Melbourne

Shane Warne, fresh from his player-of-the-series exploits against Pakistan, will lead Victoria for the first time this season when they host Tasmania in Sheffield Shield action next week.

Warne captured 27 wickets as Australia swept Pakistan aside 3-0 in Colombo and Sharjah over the last few weeks.

The champion leg-spinner has now taken 477 Test wickets, second only to world record holder Courtney Walsh of the West Indies, who retired last season with a tally of 519.

Victoria added Warne and all-rounder Jon Moss to a squad of 13 for the October 30 match at the Melbourne Cricket Ground, just a week before the opening Ashes Test against England in Brisbane.

Fletcher

FROM PAGE 13 "Overall, I think England will have to be all fit and firing to test the Aussies, who are playing such great cricket.

"I think England can be competitive, but they have to be firing on all cylinders.

"There were some good signs for them. Nasser Hussain batted brilliantly and Robert Key played well, too."

TEAMS

ENGLAND (from): Nasser Hussain (captain), Marcus Trescothick, Mark Butcher, Robert Key, John Crawley, Alec Stewart, James Foster, Andrew Caddick, Matthew Hoggard, Simon Jones, Steve Harmison, Ashley Giles, Richard Dawson.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA: Michael Hussey (captain), Beau Casson, Michael Clark, Murray Goodwin, Kade Harvey, Shaun Marsh, Scott Meuleman, Marcus North, Chris Rogers, Luke Ronchi, Callum Thorp, Paul Wilson (12th man to be named).

Glenn needs

FROM PAGE 13 against Pakistan.

"To me Mark Waugh is a legend of the game and it would be great to see him go out on his terms," McGrath said.

"I think he's a match-winner in the slips. There's a lot of pressure on him. He's a class player and it would be great for him and the team to turn around and score plenty of runs.

"Ideally at the end of the day he's got to be scoring runs as well."

But there was no such generosity towards the English, who will enter the five-Test series as underdogs.

"I think at the end of the day if Australia plays as well as we can there's not many teams that will beat us," McGrath said.

"We have played some very good cricket over the last month so hopefully that can continue in the Ashes series."

Darren threatens

FROM PAGE 13 Pakistan 3-0 in this month's three-Test series in Colombo and Sharjah.

Lehmann knows he must force the selectors' hands by registering some healthy totals against NSW on his home ground.

"Everyone's dream is to play in an Ashes Test series," Lehmann said after arriving back home from Sharjah.

"Hopefully, if I get a chance, I can play well. It's really up to me to make as many (runs) as I can before that first Test and then see what the selectors do from there.

"But Mark Waugh's been a great servant as well, so it's a tough call."

Waugh finished the Pakistan series with scores of 55, 0, 2 and 23 at an average of 20.

Over his past 17 Test innings, the 37-year-old has averaged just over 30 - but one fact that may save him is an average of 50.09 against England.

Tudor may join England



AFP, Perth

The injury-ravaged England cricket squad may be reinforced by other English players already in Australia, including Surrey fast bowler Alex Tudor, England coach Duncan Fletcher said here Wednesday.

With three key players under injury clouds, the touring side's management was monitoring the situation closely and could make decisions over the next few days, Fletcher said.

He was speaking after an announcement that England's big all-rounder Andrew Flintoff was to fly to Adelaide Thursday for intensive treatment in a bid to be fit for the first Ashes Test starting in Brisbane two weeks later.

"Tudor is at the English Cricket Board (ECB) Academy in Adelaide and other players are around in Australia, practising, and if the injuries don't work out, we may have to make a decision to bring them in," Fletcher said.

He declined to name other players who could be on a replacement shortlist.

Flintoff, 24, from Lancashire, is still recovering from a hernia operation after the third Test against India in England last summer.

Flintoff and Fletcher said they believed his chances of being ready for Brisbane would be improved by a few days at the ECB Academy in the South Australian capital.

Flintoff, ace fast bowler Darren Gough and prolific opening batsman Michael Vaughan are all fighting to be in peak condition for the

'Gabba clash launching the five-Test Ashes series.

Gough and Vaughan are both recovering from knee surgery.

Other squad members, including fast bowler Simon Jones, have minor injuries which have been described as "niggles".

Fletcher said: "While Andrew's recovery program is running behind



ALEX TUDOR

schedule, we remain confident he will be able to take part in the Ashes series.

"However, our physiotherapist, Kirk Russell, has a heavy workload because of the number of injuries in the squad and we feel the medical team at the Academy are best placed to give Andrew the intensive one-on-one treatment he needs."

Flintoff said: "Hopefully, I will become fitter quicker by having intensive treatment."

"I certainly still have aspirations and hopes for the first Test. I am definitely not ruling myself out."

Fletcher said Gough and Vaughan would also miss a two-day

match against Western Australia, starting at the WACA Ground Thursday, and were doubtful for a three-day clash against the same side from next Monday.

"Vaughan has a very good chance of playing in the next three-day match against Queensland, starting in Brisbane on November 2," Fletcher said.

"Gough is pretty positive. He has bowled on each of the past two days and there has been no reaction. He is feeling pretty bullish at this stage."

Fletcher said he did not want to predict when Gough might be ready for a game or whether he would be fit for the opening Test.

"We don't want to push him too soon. We'll just have to wait and see. We won't know whether he is ready for the Test unless he is ready for the Brisbane three-day game."

"We just want to see how things go in the next couple of days."

Fletcher defended the decision to bring to Australia players not fit for immediate action.

"The medical advice was that they would be ready about the time of two three-day matches before the first Test," he said.

"This is why we have contingency plans. We have a player in South Australia we might be looking at (Tudor), we have some batters around Australia. We made sure they have arrived here and are playing some cricket."

"We will make decisions over the next four or five days."

"It is not a 100 per cent situation, but it is the best we can do at this stage."

Pay dispute in New Zealand

REUTERS, Auckland

New Zealand Cricket (NZC) and the New Zealand Cricket Players' Association (NZCPA) have agreed that no breach of bargaining protocol occurred in a lingering dispute between the two parties over player payments.

New Zealand players have gone on strike between October 1 to October 31, forcing the cancellation of an annual pre-season training camp in Lincoln.

The NZCPA had sought mediation over the impasse after NZC chief executive Martin Snedden released his side's documents to the public two weeks ago.

Snedden, however, denied the claim and the two parties have jointly agreed that neither side had breached the protocol.

"In the event any one of them (the two parties) should place information into the public domain, then any other party shall be free to comment publicly on that information," the parties said in a joint statement on Tuesday.

"If one party should present information within the negotiating process, then that information shall remain confidential to the parties and not be referred to the media or elsewhere without the prior consent of the presenting party."

Snedden, however, was unimpressed that a revised NZCPA offer, which had been promised last week, will now not be submitted for NZC's consideration until Sunday.

"We expected a counter offer that never came," he told reporters on Monday.

"My philosophy is that, when we are deciding to allocate resources, we have to strike a balance in the interests of all players in New Zealand."

"The Players' Association are a little bit different. They expect NZC to look after the international and first-class players first without taking into account the other obligations NZC has."

"We have a long way to go. They have put a fairly positive spin on their response to our offer," he added. "But we haven't received their counter proposal."

The NZCPA initially asked NZC for a 60 per cent increase in payments for New Zealand's first-class players but the NZC countered with a proposed hike of just three per cent.

New Zealand's first-class season is scheduled to start in mid-November when CPA members will only have two weeks with their respective provinces before India arrive for a tour involving two Tests and seven one-day internationals.

Viv's son signing for Middlesex?

REUTERS, London

The teenage son of former West Indies captain Viv Richards is set to sign for English county Middlesex, the club has confirmed.

A spokesman told this news agency that Mali Richards had been offered a part-time contract and that he was expected to sign it in the near future.

"We will make an official announcement after that," the spokesman said.

A left-handed batsman, Mali was born in England and had also been attracting interest from other counties. He is due to be available for Middlesex for certain matches while continuing with his education.

Earlier this year, the Daily Telegraph newspaper reported that he could switch his allegiance from West Indies to England.

"My ambition is to play international cricket, for the West Indies hopefully, but if the chance did come along for me to play for England, I'd probably take it," he was quoted as saying.

He has already represented Antigua at senior level.

Viv Richards, the current West Indies chairman of selectors, played 121 Tests for West Indies, scoring 8,540 runs at 50.23 per visit. He also played 187 one-dayers, averaging 47.

Dokic bans parents

BBC ONLINE, London

Jelena Dokic has refused to allow her feuding parents into the players' area at a WTA tournament in Austria.

The 19-year-old Yugoslav, who was runner-up at the Generali Ladies Open in Linz last year, took the decision after a family row with parents Damir and Liliana.

Father Dokic was even arrested at one tournament, so you have to be careful.

"We have had information from the WTA that we cannot give Jelena's parents access passes," said tournament organiser Peter Michael Reichel.

"There was a row at the Filderstadt tournament recently which had to be broken up and since then she has been screened off. She has her own security here on top of our tournament security."

"Father Dokic has made negative headlines fairly often and was even arrested at one tournament, so you have to be careful."



German tennis legend Boris Becker (C) arrives with his lawyers at the Munich regional court yesterday.

Tax scam Becker's denial



AFP, Munich

German tennis legend Boris Becker on Wednesday denied being a tax cheat as the former Wimbledon champion stood trial in the latest scandal surrounding his colorful personal life.

The 34-year-old heartthrob, a national hero since becoming the youngest man and first German ever to win Wimbledon, told the court he had his mind on tennis - and ladies - between 1991 and 1993, when he allegedly ducked 1.5 million euros (dollars) in taxes.

"I accept my responsibility for a mistake I made 10 years ago. I will have to pay for it," said Becker, who was blinded by camera flashes as he arrived at court in a natty gray suit and tie to set off his famed blue eyes.

"I had tennis on my mind - nice apartment during those years when he claimed official residence in the tax haven of Monaco.

He said he rarely stayed in the "spartan and makeshift" apartment, and told the packed courtroom he was not guilty of any "criminal intrigue."

Known as "Boom Boom" for his once-powerful serve, the three-time Wimbledon winner gave his current address as Munich's posh Palace Hotel and described his occupation now as tennis manager.

Authorities have denied press rumours that Becker has cut a deal in which he would admit wrongdoing and pay off the money to avoid going to prison.

Every twist in the case, which broke in the press this summer, has earned headlines around the world for Becker, who raked in 25 million euros in winnings in his career but has since become fodder for the tabloids.

He endured a messy divorce from his American wife Barbara Feltus, with whom he has two sons, after admitting to fathering a baby with a Russian model during a brief but

close encounter in the linen closet of a London restaurant.

Becker was later linked to a young hip-hop singer but that romance quickly fizzled in the glare of publicity.

Despite the scandals, the German public has not lost its affection for Becker, who until 1993 stayed in the world top-10 rankings every year since 1985, when he won Wimbledon the first time months ahead of his 18th birthday.

"We grew up with Boris. We were proud of him when he won Wimbledon aged 17. He was our little brother. We knew about his first car, his first suit, his first beard and his first love," the Bild newspaper said.

The last time the German tennis world was caught up in a similar case was in 1997, when the father of former women's world number one Steffi Graf was sentenced to three years and nine months in jail for tax fraud.

Becker's trial is scheduled to last three days.

Corretja shocked



REUTERS, Basel

Spain's Alex Corretja has suffered a shock 6-4, 5-7, 6-1 defeat to Swiss wildcard Ivo Heuberger in the opening round of the Swiss Indoors tournament.

Corretja, 15th in the Champions Race, was favourite to progress past a player ranked 99 positions below him.

But memories of a first-round loss in last year's tournament returned to haunt the 27-year-old Spaniard after he came back from a shaky start to level the match only then slump to a disappointing defeat.

Heuberger, 26, began the match at pace and rapidly clocked up two successive breaks to move into a comfortable lead as his more experienced opponent struggled to get into the game.

Corretja recovered to break back and, with a faltering first serve, Heuberger almost lost his advantage.

But it all came together when it mattered most and Heuberger brought up set point with an ace then won it with the un-returnable serve that followed.

The second set began as the first had finished, with Heuberger in control to break Corretja for the third time as he displayed a perfect mix of power and patience.

But it was a different story again in the fifth game of the second set, which saw Corretja raise a fist as he broke his opponent to love with a

classy cross-court shot.

That proved to be the turning point of the set, and Corretja rallied to level the scores at one set each.

Heuberger saved his best until last, however, and he broke Corretja twice to move to a 3-0 lead in the final set then stroled to close out the match and set up a second-round meeting with Spaniard Felix Mantilla.

Heuberger's performance gave the Swiss crowd some cheer after German qualifier Alexander Waske knocked out home wild card George

Felix Mantilla, also of Spain, was another to make it through the early stages when he beat German Lars Burgsmuller 6-7, 6-2, 6-4.

In an all-Argentine first round clash Agustin Calleri made short work of Jose Acasuso to win 6-1, 6-4.

That set up a clash with sixth seed David Nalbandian, another Argentine, who won the final match of the day.

Nalbandian, this year's Wimbledon defeated finalist and 16th in the Champions race, was taken to a tie-break in the opening set of his match against Olivier Mutis.

But he went though 7-6, 1-0 after his French opponent pulled out with an abdominal muscle strain.

Nasser says

FROM PAGE 13 describing England's bowling performance in Perth as "Shoddyline".

The Age newspaper ran the headline "England wide of mark in tour opener", while the Australian newspaper said the tourists were "embarrassed" by Tuesday's loss.

The ACB Chairman's XI included 47-year-old batsman David Hookes, who famously hit England captain Tony Greig for five consecutive boundaries in the 1977 Centenary Test in Melbourne.

Hookes made 10 on Tuesday, including a six off left-arm spinner Ashley Giles.

John Player en route to HK

PRESS RELEASE

Leaving behind Thailand's Chao Phraya freshwaters, the 'John Player' is now sailing towards Hong Kong, the final destination of the 2002 World Adventure.

Similarly to the river whose shores it straddles, Bangkok the capital of Thailand is a major trading point, relying on a vast brown-water

navy to move goods to any point in the world. A testimonial to the intricate marriage between shipping and business in Thailand is best explained by observing the incessant activity at the various terminals dotting the river where sea-going freighters load and unload their cargo around the clock.

With rice traditionally dominating national exports, garment exports

have made inroads and Thai clothes now account for an ever increasing number of containers sailing down the Chao Phraya. This new industry has grown from a strong sense of entrepreneurship combined with the knowledge derived from silk weaving.

Hong Kong the next destination for the 2002 World Adventure will mark the end of this year's voyage exploring the Spirit of Enterprise experienced at each destination by the 'John Player.'

Located some 2000 miles around the South Asian peninsula, this shipping port has steadily grown into an economical powerhouse taking the lead as an Asian financial and manufacturing center. Hong Kong's stock exchange, almost unknown less than 30 years ago has now become one of the majors on the world scene.

The John Player, a 140-foot mahogany and teak brigantine, set sail from Dubai en route to Hong Kong on her new journey, the Spirit of Enterprise on July 23rd, 2002.

This year's trip will explore how maritime history has contributed to economic success in each of the destinations along the route.

Safin sees off Saulnier



AFP, Moscow

Russia's defending champion Marat Safin battled into the second round of the one-million-dollar Saint Petersburg Open here Tuesday after a tough three setter against French qualifier Cyril Saulnier.

The second seed saw off his 27-year-old rival 7-6, 6-7, 6-3 in their first ever head-to-head clash.

The Frenchman broke Safin's serve in the fourth game of the opening set but the 2000 US Open champion immediately broke back

to level.

Safin then won the tiebreak 7-5, his precision on key shots winning the day.

Saulnier, 118th in the ATP race, then seized an early 3-1 lead in the second with a break in the third game.

But 22-year-old Safin broke back to level at 3-3 after his rival produced a catalogue of unforced errors.

The second went to another tiebreak, which Saulnier won 7-2 to square the match.

In the deciding set Safin, who needs to reach the final here to clinch a berth in the season-ending Tennis Masters Cup, looked in

complete command, breaking Saulnier twice to win the set and the match to face Vladimir Voltchkov of Belarus for a place in the quarter-finals.

Another local crowd favourite Yevgeny Kafelnikov, fifth seed and 1995 champion here, outclassed Germany's Michael Kohlmann, a lucky loser out of qualifying, 7-6, 6-0.

Kafelnikov will now face Dominik Hrbaty of Slovakia in the second round.

Argentina's Gaston Gaudio, seeded seventh here, experienced few problems on his way to the second round, ousting Belarus qualifier Alexander Shvec in straight sets 7-5, 7-5.

Gaudio will now face Russia's wild card Andrei Stoliarov, who managed to overcome another Frenchman Anthony Dupuis 7-5, 3-6, 7-6 in their opening round clash.

Ninth seed Andrei Pavel of Romania also booked his pass to the second round with a 6-1, 6-3 win over Georgia's Irakli Labadze, who came into the main draw through the qualification tournament.

Hewitt gets a walkover

AFP, Stockholm

Lleyton Hewitt glided into the second round of the 650,000-dollar Stockholm Open Tuesday when injured Swede Thomas Enqvist pulled out before their opening match.

In a rare instance on the ATP tour, not a single lucky loser from the qualifying rounds had signed on by a 12:30pm deadline to stand by in case of injury to a player already in the draw and, as a result, there was no replacement available for Enqvist, who has been troubled by a shoulder problem since the US Open.

The free ride puts world number one Hewitt into a contest against Dutchman Raemon Sluiter as the Australian battles to keep his distance on top of the rankings from hard-charging rival Andre Agassi.

Hewitt, who missed last week's Masters in Madrid due to injury, received a late wild-card entry into Stockholm.

He and Agassi have already qualified for the eight-man Masters Cup in Shanghai next month with the remaining six places to be decided during tournament matches this week and next.

Also in the running for a Shanghai place is Australian Open winner Thomas Johansson, who would gain a special entry if he finishes higher than French Open holder Albert Costa of Spain.

Rules for the season-ending event specify a spot for a reigning Grand Slam champion standing inside the Top 20 - Johansson currently has 330 points, with Costa ahead on 393.

Sweden's Andreas Vinciguerra won a battle of qualifiers at the Kungliga hallen, defeating Karol Beck of Slovakia 7-6, 6-1, while Belgian batter Olivier Rochus forced Jan-Michael Gambill to struggle before the American finally earned a 6-1, 3-6, 7-6 win.

The 1.65-metre Rochus, made a match of it, with Gambill needing five match points to finally earn the victory.

But after denying Gambill on four successive chances, the European missed on his own match-winning opportunity.

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.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

Crossword puzzle grid and clues. Clues include: 1 Vagrant character's partner, 7 Small towns, 12 LAX info, 13 Honest politician, 14 Where the action is, 15 Smith or Claiborne, 16 Good-looking, 18 Ancient woman, 19 Graceful woman, 20 Sport, 22 Grounded Aussie, 23 Whom Tolo started, 27 Remnant, 29 Good-looking, 31 Suspect's way out, 34 Cause of waste, 35 Good-looking, 37 Britney's genre, 38 Ice skating maneuver.

Cryptiquip puzzle grid. A 10x10 grid with some letters filled in and numbers indicating starting positions for words.

CRYPTOQUIP
D Q I E H P H Q E D L L V D L
U H Z T P M W H L S Z I T H C D U I W S
L I C D . L I Z X H D E Z G H C
Z S V D L D B I B M W Z G .
Yesterday's Cryptiquip: TO HEAR THE SOLAR SYSTEM'S RADIO STATIONS, YOU MIGHT TRY TURNING YOUR SUN DIAL.
Today's Cryptiquip Clue: E equals L