

## 'Paris love match could be tough'

AFP, Melbourne

Andre Agassi thinks he will have his work cut out persuading wife Steffi Graf to join him for mixed doubles - and he reckons the all-star couple might get thrashed even if they do play.

Agassi's victory at the Australian Open here Sunday paves the way for him and retired former world number one Graf to join forces at the French Open in May.

The 32-year-old said although Graf had in theory agreed to play doubles at Roland Garros with him if he won the Australian Open, she still needed to be persuaded.

"She's not too pleased about that, but hopefully I'll have 50 years with her to be mad at me about more things," said Agassi, when asked about the pact following his win here Sunday.

"It's going to be my responsibility to make it happen. I'm the one that said it so I've got to make it up to her somehow. Count on me to work on it," added Agassi, who married 22-time Grand Slam winner Graf in October 2001.

Agassi thinks that even if he is successful in coaxing Graf out of retirement for Paris the glamorous duo are unlikely to do well.

"I assure you if we do play, we don't have much of a chance, definitely not," Agassi said.

## Friendly cricket

PRESS RELEASE

Coats Bangladesh outplayed HSBC by nine wickets in a friendly match at the Banani WAPDA ground on Friday.

Winning the toss, HSBC batted first and scored 157 all out in 32.3 overs. In reply, Coats made 159 for one in 26 overs.

### SCORES IN BRIEF

HSBC: 157 all out in 32.3 overs (Aqib 31, Nafis 27, Shourab 25, Rashed 3/25, Ahsan 2/17, Ehsan 2/19 and Aftab, 2/22).

COATS BANGLADESH: 159/1 in 26 overs (Adil Jr 92, Borhan 39\*, Rashed 4\*, Mamun, 1/45).

## Shane Warne

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anything to anybody about what I can do on the field on the big occasion.

"What I have to do is just prove it to myself that my shoulder is OK and just keep giving it a rip. As the games go on, hopefully I will keep improving.

"I still have a few little doubts about certain things, but I'm not far away. It's all about momentum and confidence."

Warne also said that England's Michael Vaughan, player of the Ashes series, was one of the best batsmen he had ever encountered.

The Yorkshire opener made 633 runs at 63.30 despite England's 4-1 series defeat and scored an impressive 60 from 81 balls in Saturday's five-run loss in the second one-day final in Melbourne.

"Besides Sachin Tendulkar, I think Michael Vaughan is probably the best player that I've played against for 10 years," Warne said.

"I can't think of somebody who's played consistently that well. Brian Lara has played a couple of great innings (against Australia).

"Just his (Vaughan's) aggressive style of play, against the quality of bowlers that he has faced all summer. Considering their team's been losing, I think that shows he is a really good player, one of the best going around."

## Heightened

FROM PAGE 13

controlled.

Upon arrival, the teams will be briefed by South African security specialists and police, who will talk to players about ICC regulations, as well as their personal safety.

At the grounds, fans will be met by metal detectors and security personnel doing manual searches.

"They will be looking for a host of restricted items, from firearms to bottles, to items that could be deemed as so-called 'ambush advertising,'" Ronan said.

Close circuit cameras will cast a beady eye over South African grounds, controlled from a central command post.

Nobody, except players and umpires will be allowed on the field, a perpetrator can get a fine of up to 4,000 dollars, or two years in jail, or both, Ronan said.

"Even just an over-excited spectator can unintentionally run into a star player who then tears a ligament," said Ronan.

South African police spokeswoman Charnain Muller said police started their deployment for the contest on Saturday.

"We have started mobilising," she said but declined to give numbers on the ground.

"Suffice to say that like the successful UN Earth Summit last year, we will have enough people to deal with any eventuality," she said.

## Hayden best in both

### Cricket

AFP, Sydney

Australia's run machine Matthew Hayden can expect to be a marked man at the World Cup after being officially recognised Sunday as the best batsman in Test and limited-overs cricket.

Hayden's 458 runs off English and Sri Lankan bowlers during the tri-nations one-day series, at an average of 65.42 and strike-rate of 91.05, moved him to the top of the PricewaterhouseCoopers one-day rankings.

He already led the Test list.

Hayden joins West Indian pair Brian Lara and Sir Vivian Richards and India's Sachin Tendulkar as the only players to have held both number one batting positions simultaneously.

While Australia's entire top order packs a big punch, Hayden will be the key wicket for opposition bowlers at the World Cup after his dominance in the tri-nations contest which ended here Saturday.

Adam Gilchrist and Ricky Ponting blaze away like torpedoes and Damien Martyn, Darren Lehmann and Michael Bevan "milk" attacks with more finesse than fervour.

Hayden can do both.

He can annihilate pacemen and spinners at better than a run a ball, but if Australia are in trouble, he can ease the tempo and bat through the innings, guarding his wicket but still getting runs.

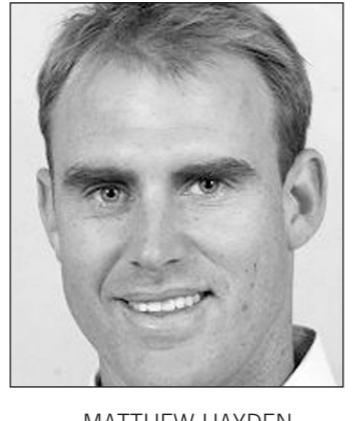
Australia's two tri-nations series finals wins against England were perfect examples. In the first, with Australia guaranteed victory, he slammed 45 off 37 balls.

In the second, as Australia

struggled with 56 for three, he compiled a less sensational but more important 69 off 91, ensuring a respectable total that ended up being enough to win the match.

He was Australia's most consistent batsmen all series, his overall being 148 runs more than Gilchrist and 152 better than Ponting.

He averaged more than 20 runs per innings better than both of them, while his strike rate was swifter than the dashing Ponting (86.19) but not



MATTHEW HAYDEN

as good as Gilchrist (119.23), who in the first final slammed a hurricane-like 69 off 37 balls.

South African captain and all-rounder Shaun Pollock leads the bowlers after carving up Pakistan recently, with Sri Lankan spinner Muttiah Muralitharan at number two ahead of Australia's Glenn McGrath.

Sri Lanka's swashbuckling left-hander Sanath Jayasuriya, who scored back-to-back tri-nations series centuries this summer, is second on the list ahead of Pakistan's Younus Youhana and India's Virender Sehwag.

Australian speedster Brett Lee -- man of the match in both tri-nations finals and also the player of the series -- reached a career-high fifth place.

With the World Cup starting February 9, Australia have the most representatives in the batting and bowling top tens ahead of South Africa.

Hayden, Bevan (sixth), Gilchrist (eighth) and Ponting (ninth) lead the batsmen with McGrath, Lee and Jason Gillespie (eighth) in the top tier

### RANKINGS

#### Batting

1. Matthew Hayden (AUS), 2. Sanath Jayasuriya (SL), 3. Younus Youhana (PAK), 4. Virender Sehwag (IND), 5. Chris Gayle (WI), 6. Michael Bevan (AUS), 7. Jonty Rhodes (RSA), 8. Adam Gilchrist (AUS), 9. Ricky Ponting (AUS) and 10. Jacques Kallis (RSA).

#### Bowling

1. Shaun Pollock (RSA), 2. Muttiah Muralitharan (SL), 3. Glenn McGrath (AUS), 4. Mahkaya Ntini (RSA), 5. Brett Lee (AUS), 6. Wasim Akram (PAK), 7. Andrew Caddick (ENG), 8. Jason Gillespie (AUS), 9. Chaminda Vaas (SL) and 10. Harbhajan Singh (IND).

#### of bowlers.

South Africa, regarded as Australia's biggest World Cup threat, have two players in the batting top 10: veteran Jonty Rhodes at seventh and all-rounder Jacques Kallis 10th.

The Proteas also have two top-10 bowlers: Pollock and paceman Makhaya Ntini in fourth.

#### SPORTS REPORTER

Twenty-one players earned full points after the second round preliminary phase matches in the Professor Abdur Razzak 29th National Chess Championship yesterday.

Following are the second round results: Nasir beat Rouf, Amin beat Mahbub, Lavli beat Mahmood, Sakil beat Roton, Pollab beat Kazal, Javed beat Parag, Ejaz beat Anwar, Emon beat Babyl, Polash beat Ariful, Masud beat Robin, Shafiq beat Amir, Arif beat Mujib, Rani beat Kabir, Monir beat Ronodev, Reza beat Shafiqul, Debaraj beat Mahtab, Monir beat Shahid, Shamsul beat Nasir and Rashed beat Mostafa.

Experienced middle-order left-hander Michael Bevan became Australia's latest casualty Saturday when he was stretchered off with a groin injury during the second round series final against England here.

The Bevan incident came shortly after young all-rounder Shane Watson had been forced to withdraw from the World Cup squad with a back problem.

Several other players, including star fast bowlers Glenn McGrath and Jason Gillespie, are still under fitness clouds.

But Hohns, chairman of the selection panel, said there was no



PHOTO: STAR

Scene from yesterday's second round preliminary phase matches of the Professor Abdur Razzak 29th National Chess Championship qualifiers at the NSC yesterday.

## Indian players given all-clear

### ICC Cricket World Cup

SOUTH AFRICA 2003

REUTERS, Calcutta

All Indian cricketers bound for next month's World Cup in South Africa have cleared precautionary dope tests, a senior board official said on Sunday.

He also held a long meeting on Sunday with captain Saurav Ganguly, coach John Wright and team physiotherapist and trainer to analyse the New Zealand tour and discuss the World Cup.

The players' wives and girl friends will be barred from joining them until they reach the second round, he said.

The 1983 champions are in Group A with defending champions Australia, England, Pakistan, Zimbabwe, Netherlands and Namibia.

The team members, who leave for the tournament on Wednesday, will hold sessions with sports psychologist Sandy Gordon during their



PHOTO: COURSEY

State Minister for Youth and Sports M Fazlur Rahman talks to a participant in the South Asian Junior Table Tennis Championships at BKSP yesterday.

## Ctg hockey Play-off today

CU CORRESPONDENT

The Bangladesh Shipping and Trade Mahanagar Hockey League title will be decided after a play-off between defending champions Anirban Club and Gangar Bari Young Society at the Dampara Police Lines ground today.

Both teams drew their final league encounter 1-1 yesterday.

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## Ctg Senior football

CU CORRESPONDENT

The CJKS Elite Paint Senior Division Football League begins today at the MAAziz Stadium.

The 10-team league kicks-off with Abahani playing Satadal Club in the opener.

The other teams are: Regency Sports Club, Chittagong Mohammmed, Chittagong City Corporation Ekadash, Customs Sports Club, BCIC Krira Sangsta, Agrabad Nowzwan Club, Friends Club and Bakulia Ekadash.

## Sylhet cricket

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Gymkhana Cricket Club recorded an emphatic 123-run victory over Young Victors Club in opening match of the Delta Life First Division Cricket League at the Sylhet Stadium yesterday.

Put into bat, Gymkhana scored 263 for nine in 50 overs. Kavi top-scored with 69 while Ahmed made 46.

Suman Tashnid and Kashem grabbed two wickets each for Young Victors.

Young Victors were dismissed for 140 in 44.5 overs. Only Suman offered some resistance with 27 runs.

## Prof Razzak chess 21 earn full points

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## Martina rewrites history

### Australian Open

AFP, Melbourne

Tennis legend Martina Navratilova made history here Sunday when she became the oldest player ever to win a Grand Slam title after landing the Australian Open mixed doubles crown.

The 46-year-old partnered India's Leander Paes in a 6-4, 7-5 victory over Australia's Todd Woodbridge and Greece's Eleni



PHOTO: AFP

Navratilova, who was 46 and two months when he won the men's doubles crown in 1924.

"When I was growing up, I wanted to be the youngest to win something, not the oldest," a beaming Navratilova said afterwards. "I certainly didn't think I'd still be playing at this age."

Navratilova's victory was assured in the second set, when a Woodbridge forehand plopped into