

## Melbourne to host Davis Cup semifinal

REUTERS, Melbourne

Melbourne will host the Davis Cup semi-final between Australia and Switzerland, Tennis Australia said on Wednesday.

The tie will be played from September 19-21 at Melbourne Park's Rod Laver Arena, the same centre court used at the Australian Open, on a Rebound Ace surface. The winners will play Argentina or Spain in the final.

The Australians, whose team includes Wimbledon champion Lleyton Hewitt and former U.S. Open finalist Mark Philippoussis, are strong favourites to win the tie.

Australia lost the 2000 Davis Cup final to France the last time they played at Melbourne Park, but non-playing captain John Fitzgerald says the players are looking forward to returning.

"All of the players love competing in Melbourne where they receive such great crowd support," Fitzgerald said.

## No French Open for Ivanisevic

AFP, Paris

Croatia's Goran Ivanisevic has pulled out of the French Open here later this month because of a foot injury, the French tennis federation said.

The 2001 Wimbledon men's singles champion, who needed surgery after cutting his left heel on a shell on a Miami beach in March, played his first Roland Garros, the world's only clay-court grand slam event, in 1989.

He is a three-time quarter-finalist - in 1990, 1992 and 1994 - but will be absent for the third consecutive time at this year's championships from May 26 to June 8 to the south west of Paris.

He will be replaced in the draw by Switzerland's Davis Cup captain Marc Rosset.

## National cricket

FROM PAGE 13

Ihenidah, Meherpur, Kushtia, Magura, Jessor and Sarkerhia.

Sylhet Division

Venue: Sylhet

Teams: Sylhet, Habiganj and Moulvibazar.

Chittagong Division

Venue: Comilla

Teams: Chittagong, Rangamati, Chandpur, Khagrachari and Feni.

Venue: Chandpur

Teams: Comilla, Lakshmpur, Noakhali and Barisal.

Barisal Division

Venue: Patuakhali

Teams: Barisal, Patuakhali, Bhola, Barguna and Pirozpur.

Dhaka Division

Venue: Faridpur

Teams: Mymensingh, Manikganj, Rajbari, Gazipur, Madaripur, Gopalganj, Narayanganj and Shariatpur.

Venue: Mymensingh

Teams: Dhaka, Sherpur, Narshingdi, Netrokona, Faridpur, Kishoreganj, Jamalpur and Tangail.

Services

Venue: Dhaka

Teams: Rajshahi University, Bangladesh Railway, Bangladesh Police, Jahangirnagar University and BUET.

## Media mauls

FROM PAGE 13

Sydney's Daily Telegraph columnist Mike Gibson criticised match referee Mike Proctor for not taking stronger action against McGrath when he began waving his finger at umpire David Shepherd.

Under the headline "Aussies are out of control", Gibson wrote: "Instead of making McGrath aware that his behaviour was unacceptable and would not be tolerated, he allowed the umpire to be humiliated by a player who had lost control."

"The lily-livered reaction of those in charge has made a laughing stock of the game."

## Sarwan, McGrath befriend

### Cricket

AFP, Sydney

Australian paceman Glenn McGrath and West Indies vice-captain Ramnaresh Sarwan have apologised to each other over their ugly confrontation in the fourth cricket Test in Antigua.

Sarwan said on Wednesday he and McGrath had cleared the air over the mid-pitch altercation on Monday which had concerned the Australian Cricket Board enough to issue a statement.

Sarwan, whose century helped steer the West Indies to a record-breaking three-wicket win in the 'dead' final match of the four-Test series on Tuesday, would not reveal what was said between the two players in the clash which caused McGrath to fly into such a finger-pointing rage that umpire David Shepherd had to step in.

But Sarwan was confident they remained on friendly terms.

"Actually both of us have apologised to each other and it's good to know that both of us did that in the good context of the game and what took place in the series and this game," Sarwan told an Australian radio station on Wednesday.

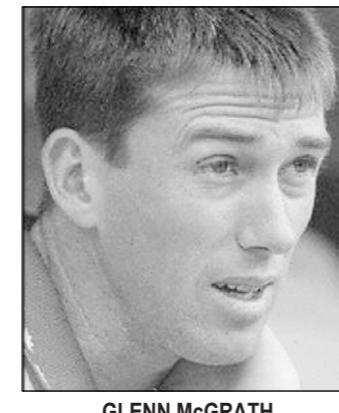
"It's good to know that we have apologised to each other and appreciate each other's friend-

ship."

Asked about the Australian team's reputation as a world leader in sledging, Sarwan said the West Indies team had no grievance with Steve Waugh's team.

"I'm not sure about that, who's the leader of that (sledging), but obviously players have things to say on the field and it's up to the individual or a team if you want to take it personal but, really and truly, we don't have a problem with each other."

"You just need to accept certain things that people say on the field and if you put it in the past, that's fine, but if you take it personal well, then I think you might find yourself in a bit of trouble."



GLENN MCGRATH



RAMNARESH SARWAN

## Australia back atop

### Cricket

AFP, St. John's

Australia's 3-1 series victory against the West Indies restored Steve Waugh's team to the top of the International Cricket Council (ICC) Test Championship table.

Australia's series win in the Caribbean took its points tally to 21 from 13 series, taking its average up to 1.62 points which is just 0.01 points higher than the average of previous leader South Africa.

Arrangements are being made for the ICC Test Championship to be transferred from South Africa to Australia.

ICC president Malcolm Gray,

himself an Australian, is due to present the trophy to the Australian Cricket Board later this month.

Australia will be the last side to head the ICC Test Championship under the present system as a new method of calculation will be introduced from June 1.

The new system, agreed by the ICC board at its Johannesburg meeting during the World Cup in South Africa on March 22, rewards teams for their performances in every Test match played as opposed to looking solely at series results.

An announcement regarding the new standings and the precise method of calculation will be made towards the end of May, the ICC said Tuesday.

### TEST LADDER

	13	10	2	1	21	1.62
Australia	13	10	2	1	21	1.62
South Africa	18	14	3	1	29	1.61
New Zealand	17	8	4	5	21	1.24
Sri Lanka	16	7	6	3	17	1.06
England	16	6	6	4	16	1.00
India	15	5	6	4	14	0.93
West Indies	17	7	10	0	14	0.82
Pakistan	16	4	8	4	12	0.75
Zimbabwe	16	3	11	2	8	0.50
Bangladesh	8	0	8	0	0	0.00

## Contrasting futures

FROM PAGE 13

later this year it may be the ideal opportunity to hand Ricky Ponting, already well established as Waugh's successor as one-day skipper, control of the Test side.

Waugh said last week he believed he still had several years left at the top level, but his 36th Test victory as captain in Barbados last week, equalising the record of former West Indies skipper Clive Lloyd, could well be his last.

Despite another heavy series defeat in which West Indies lost three home Tests in a row for the first time in their history, Lara was full of optimism.

West Indies have grown over the last two years and achieving this will catapult us to great things in the future," Lara said. "We've improved in every Test and I think we are not going to lose another Test this year. It showed character and a progression of the guys' mentality," the 34-year-old added.

"This is an opportunity for them to understand that they've created history."

The fact that Lara, who said before the fourth Test that his team were on the verge of "something fantastic", did not play the crucial role was perhaps the most significant factor for West Indies, who have been in the doldrums for years after dominating world cricket in the late 1970s and 1980s.

However his under-rated off-spin has seen him take 114 Test wickets.

Although the record-breaking left-hander made 128 runs in the match, it was centuries by Sarwan and Shivnarine Chanderpaul, the fast bowling of Jermaine Lawson and the courageous batting of 20-year-old off spinner Omari Banks that inspired their side's unexpected triumph.

West Indies next face a home series against Sri Lanka and with Lara more secure than ever in his position as captain they have reason to feel there is finally light at the end of what has been a long tunnel.

"We already pay taxes on our earnings from KCA and I think we did a good job for the nation which the government should appreciate and give us a tax waiver," Tikolo said.

Even though a successful Test career is now shorter than it used to be, at six to ten years, wives and girlfriends are no longer tolerating their lot as cricket widows and virtual single parents.

The problems appear both generational and cultural, with majority of divorces occurring in England, though a quick check reveals that nowhere is immune.

India, to pick a country with different social mores, has its marital casualties: before he was ever accused of match-fixing, Mohammad Azharuddin caused a

scandal by walking out of arranged marriage and settling down with a Bollywood actress.

Jagaval Srinath's marriage broke up and Saurav Ganguly's touched breaking point when he was photographed at a temple with another film star. Other cricketers caught in full glare of Indian celebrity have been tempted, though many feel it is a honey-trap used by underworld figures hoping to blackmail players into fixing matches.

The absenteeism is felt far more in England, where little more than a few weeks separate hectic six-month home season and the moment wives wave their husbands off on tour in October.

Once a relationship becomes strained, cricket rarely seems able to offer a compromise. Recently, Darren Gough, Graham Thorpe, Mark Butcher and Dominic Cork have all seen their marriages break up while on England duty.

Others are doing the sums, and players who spent last winter with both Test and one-day sides in Australia and World Cup in South Africa did not see their beds for 140 nights. Missing kids growing up is a regret many cricketers cite as

## Szabo dragged into drugs controversy

AFP, Paris

ACB chief executive James Sutherland on Tuesday told Test captain Steve Waugh to rein in his players' emotions after the unseemly outburst by McGrath.

Sutherland said he spoke to

Waugh and both agreed the incident was unfortunate and bordering on inappropriate behaviour.

He said the Australian team had

a duty to uphold the spirit of the game whether it was winning or losing.

"It's all very well to be playing

the game in the right spirit when

things are going your way, but if

things are not going your way,

that's when the real test is on,"

Sutherland said in Melbourne.

French customs confirmed the paper's report that they had seized drugs in a car belonging to the Romanian, 1,500m world and 5,000m Olympic champion, and were checking whether they were banned performance-enhancers.

Szabo, 27, was not in the car

when it was stopped by the customs near the Italian border.

She was making her own way

from her South African winter

training base to the altitude resort of Font Romeu in the French Pyrenees.

Among the drugs seized were

progesterone, used for hormonal

replacement therapy, and

Actovegin, a food supplement made from veal's blood.

The International Olympic

Committee's medical

commission president Patrick

Schamisch told l'Equipe that

Actovegin was no longer considered

an endurance-enhancer

although it was still officially on the

prohibited list.



PHOTO: INTERNET American Serena Williams in action against Klara Koukalova of the Czech Republic at the Rome Masters Series on Tuesday.

## Serena moves on

### Tennis

AFP, Rome

World number one and defending champion Serena Williams clinched a place in the third round of the Rome Masters here on Tuesday after beating Czech Klara Koukalova 6-4, 6-3 at the Foro Italico.

Given a first round bye, Williams performed well below her best but still had too much for her fellow 21-year-old, ranked 72nd in the world.

Williams, holder of all four of the Grand Slam titles - Australian, French, Wimbledon and US - will now meet France's Natalie Dechy, who defeated South African 14th seed Amanda Coetzer in three sets.