

Kiwis coming

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in the aftermath of terror attacks in the United States.

Pakistan's cricketing woes further compounded when the West Indies, in February, and then Australia, in October last year, refused to tour Pakistan and their series were played at neutral venues.

"We are delighted with the news because it would open doors for international teams to resume tours to Pakistan more regularly," said PCB chief executive Ramiz Raja.

Raja on Wednesday said that international cricket's return to Pakistan will get a real boom if two one-day games, one each in Pakistan and India, take place.

The Board of Control for Cricket in India has sought its government's approval to play the games in order to restore bilateral cricketing ties severed since 2000 amid tensions over the disputed region of Kashmir.

Bangladesh will tour Pakistan from mid-August and play three Tests and five one-day games followed by South Africa's three Tests and three one-dayers.

"We are already hosting Bangladesh and South Africa between August and October but the tour by the Black Caps will be significant as they were the last team to come to Pakistan before their tour was curtailed because of reasons beyond PCB's control," Raja said.

Pakistan had demanded monetary compensation from the International Cricket Council (ICC) during its meetings in London last year and then in Johannesburg, South Africa in March this year.

NZC had agreed to compensate Pakistan by playing either a Test or five one-day games.

"New Zealand's acceptance also indicates that we were not only able to convince NZC but also the ICC that Pakistan was a safe country to play cricket," he said.

Gough back

FROM PAGE 13

Andrew Flintoff, Ashley Giles, Darren Gough, Stephen Harmison, Richard Johnson, Robert Key, Anthony McGrath, Chris Read, Vikram Solanki, Marcus Trescothick, James Troughton.

ENGLISH SCHEDULE

Schedule for England's one-day international series against Pakistan and the triangular series also involving Zimbabwe and South Africa starting in June:

PAKISTAN MATCHES

June 17: Manchester
June 20: The Oval
June 22: Lord's
TRI-SERIES
June 26: England v Zimbabwe
June 28: England v Africa
June 29: South Africa v Zimbabwe
July 1: England v Zimbabwe
July 3: England v Africa
July 5: South Africa v Zimbabwe
July 6: England v Zimbabwe
July 8: England v Africa
July 10: South Africa v Zimbabwe
July 12: Final, Lord's

Another Agassi escape act

French Open

AFP, Paris

Andre Agassi performed a French Open escape on Wednesday that escapologist extraordinaire Harry Houdini would have been proud of.

The eight-time Grand Slam champion and one of only five men to win all four Grand Slam singles titles and the only one to do so on three different surfaces died with death in winning the Roland Garros crown in 1999, coming from two sets down to see off Ukrainian Andre Medvedev.

On Wednesday, he went close to the edge once more, edging out Croatian teen Mario Ancic 5-7, 1-6, 6-4, 6-2, 7-5 to reach the third round of the men's singles.

The 33-year-old Las Vegas's immediate prize is a meeting with Belgian 26th seed Xavier Malisse to determine who bags a place in the last 16, the stage at which the wheat becomes separated from the chaff.

Experience has taught me that every point needs to be the most important point," said Agassi, recognising this was just the kind of match to show him where his game is after he came here with almost no preparation on European clay, having lost in the opening round in Rome and missed Hamburg and Monte Carlo.

"In tennis you have to finish off the match somethings is always going to change psychologically as you get closer to the finish line.

"But that's what tennis is all about. You have to dig deep."

Agassi, who already has the Australian Open title under his belt this season and landed his 763rd victory to take him one ahead of long-time rival Pete Sampras revealed that standing on the court at Roland Garros inspires him more than any other venue.

"This particular tournament is the one that has made my career so full," said Agassi, who aged just 18 went all the way to the semi-finals before losing another five-setter to Swedish champion Mats Wilander.

He then lost the finals here in



PHOTO: AFP
Andre Agassi of the United States is all set to make a return against Croatian Mario Ancic during their second round fixture of the French Open in Paris yesterday.

1990 and 1991 to undergo what he termed the "devastation and disappointment of two lost finals."

But the love affair with the event was finally consummated with his win over Medvedev.

"I'll never forget what that meant to me," he explained.

After giving a two-set and a break start to a man 14 years his junior Agassi showed that class, not age, is what matters.

"I feel like I have a new life right now. It's not easy out there under any circumstances let alone when you're in a tussle, a dogfight."

On the double fault which almost derailed him as he failed to serve out at 5-3 in the decider Agassi was unapologetic.

"I always tend to stay aggressive no matter where the nerves are."

"When you double fault you regret the decision. I might have rushed a little bit. I managed to settle down and still get it done."

As the crowd urged him on by chanting his name and indulging in repeated Mexican waves, Agassi was almost in a world of his own.

He then lost the finals here in

"I didn't hear anything. I was a bit distracted with what was going on on the court!"

But, paying tribute to "some of the most enthusiastic fans in the world" he said the feeling had been just like four years ago.

"You play for those moments, the challenge of responding to those moments."

"I've gone into Slams not feeling so good and vice versa. You have to find a way when it matters the most."

"I hope the story was that this was the match I needed to get through."

Ancic, who hails from Split, the home town of former Wimbledon champion Goran Ivanisevic, ended up with his shirt and shorts caked in the red clay after leaping around, Boris Becker-style, to stave off the inevitable.

But he enjoyed the experience, even in defeat.

"The crowd was unbelievable. Everything was perfect except I lost," he said.

Milan shoot to glory

FROM PAGE 13

long, Juventus seemed to sense a chance to take the lead in the dying minutes of the first half and the Milanese defence were grateful to scramble the ball to safety after a Del Piero overhead kick had generated panic in their midst.

It was Rui Costa however who had the last word of the opening act, unleashing a fierce drive that Buffon did well to smother at his near post.

Antonio Conte, a second half substitute for Mauro Camoranesi, made an instant impression by heading Del Piero's swirling cross on to the Milan crossbar.

Juventus's fear of the threat

posed by Maldini at set pieces was underlined by Alessio Tacchinardi's attempts to dispossess him of his shirt as the pair jostled for position in the box.

Maldini managed to shrug off his marker for long enough to get his head to Rui Costa's freekick but his contact was fractionally too weak and the ball spun away to safety.

With 25 minutes left, Lippi replaced his midfield lynchpin Davids with Uruguayan forward Marcelo Zalayeta.

But on the pitch it was Milan who looked the more determined to seal victory inside regulation time.

Juventus's fear of the threat

Their best chance to do so fell to the tireless Inzaghi. With a quarter of an hour remaining, the former Juventus striker got in front of his marker to meet Sertigino's inviting cross to the near post.

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WEST INDIES (from): Chris Gayle, Wavell Hinds, Devon Smith, Ramnaresh Sarwan, Brian Lara (captain), Marlon Samuels, Ricardo Powell, Ryan Hurley, Ridley Jacobs, Omari Banks, David Bernard, Vasbert Drakes, Mervyn Dillon, Corey Collymore.

AUSTRIA (from): Matthew Hayden, Adam Gilchrist, Ricky Ponting (captain), Darren Lehmann, Michael Clarke, Andrew Symonds, Michael Bevan, Ian Harvey, Brad Hogg, Andy Bichel, Nathan Hauritz, Brett Lee, Jason Gillespie.

Referee: Markus Merk (GER)

Indo-Pak collapse

Hockey

AFP, Perth

Australia beat India 2-0 here Thursday to march into Sunday's tri-nations challenge series final as Australia A managed a shock 5-3 win over Pakistan, leaving Pakistan facing an uphill battle.

An on-form Australia will be a strong favorite in the decider. They already whipped Pakistan 3-0 in the opening encounter of the contest a day earlier.

Australia began brightly against India, who finished fourth at last year's Champions' Trophy tournament, with striker Tristram Woodhouse poaching a goal in the third minute.

The 28-year-old pounced on a favourable rebound from Indian goalkeeper Devesh Chauhan to score his second goal in international company.

The visitors hotly disputed the goal, believing the ball went over the backline beforehand, but the goal stood.

Australia were unable to mount many more attacking raids for the rest of the first half.

With Australia failing to control the midfield, India threatened to equalise through one of their many penetrating counter-attacks.

Only fine work by goalkeeper Mick Hickman foiled strikers Prabjot Singh and Gagan Ajit Singh, ensuring Australia led 1-0 at half-time.

A lesson in French

AFP, Paris

Lindsay Davenport's recent marriage has caused some consternation for umpires at the French Open on whether she should be referred to as a madame or the more youthful and single mademoiselle.

She even felt obliged to discuss the matter with the judge in charge of her 7-5, 6-1 second round defeat of Uzbekistan's Iroda Tulyaganova.

"I was just curious, they've been calling me a few different names here" said the 36-year-old American who married long-time companion John Leach on a Hawaii beach last month, becoming one of the very few wives active on the WTA circuit.

"It was a question of what the appropriate title for myself is. They've said madame, they've said mademoiselle."

"I was asking her just didn't know. She was very nice about it."

Davenport said she had no particular preference but reckoned that as she is not using her married name in the world of tennis, mademoiselle might be more appropriate.

And asked if she had any intentions of using Leach or Davenport-Leach or some other combination, she replied firmly: "I'm staying Davenport."

The confusion did little to avert her concentration against the dangerous Tulyaganova as she overcame a sticky spell midway through the first set to run out a comfortable winner.

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French fries

French Open

AFP, Paris

make the grade.

The defending women's champion admits to being a perfectionist but is less tense than she was on court.

"I don't show my emotions as much anymore as I used to. I try not to wear them on my sleeve."

Naturally, the keen student of fashion prefers to wear her own designs.

DON'T BITETHE HAND

Ashley Harkleroad knows not to bite the hand that feeds her.

After seeing off ninth seed Daniela Hantuchova she ran to embrace a woman sitting courtside in her entourage.

Asked who it was the US teen explained it was her agent.

"Obviously that's a very good person to run to," she laughed.

THE PRESENT IS ORANGE

Andy Roddick, the US sixth seed who failed to live up to his reputation with his first-round French Open loss to Armenian Sargs Sargsian, had the consolation of being awarded the 'lemon' prize for his 'strong character' and engaging personality.

The prize used to be handed to the player having the worst relations with the media with Chilean Marcelo Rios a serial winner on that score.

The orange prize, for the player enjoying the most cordial relations with reporters, went to home favourite Amelie Mauresmo.

Rafael Nadal, Spain's 16-year-old star in the making but absent from Paris through injury, was deemed revelation of the year.

Serena Williams is playing it cool these days, unburdened following four straight Grand Slam wins by questions as to whether she will

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS	38	Speak	3	Oscar	—	22	Eviliser-	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
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