

McGrath has surgery

AFP, Sydney

Australian pace bowler Glenn McGrath was due to undergo surgery Friday to remove a piece of bone from his chronically injured left ankle, doctors said.

McGrath flew to Sydney on Thursday after the injury ached up during Australia's 2-0 Test series win against visiting Bangladesh in the northern city of Darwin.

An examination by specialists here led to the decision to operate. The injury knocked McGrath out of a three-match one-day series against Bangladesh beginning Saturday.

"Glenn's ankle has been a problem area for a period of time, but over the years we have been able to monitor and control the injury without the need for surgery," said Cricket Australia medical officer Trefor James.

"It was... felt that this was the most opportune time to perform the procedure, given that the team is approaching a two-month interval in the international schedule," James said.

McGrath was expected to be released from hospital Saturday and would have two months for rehabilitation before Australia's next international competition against Zimbabwe in early October.

Super fast

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16 - Len Hutton (ENG) v NZL, Lord's 1937, v WIS, Lord's 1939.

16 - Frank Worrell (WIS) v ENG, P-of-

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AUS, Adelaide 1951-52.

16 - Lawrence Rowe (WIS) v NZL, Kingston 1971-2, v ENG, P-of-

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17 - George Headley (WIS) v ENG, Bridgetown 1929-30, v AUS, SCG 1930-31.

17 - Sidney Barnes (AUS) v ENG, The Oval 1938, v ENG, Lord's 1948.

17 - Graeme Smith (RSA) v AUS, Cape Town 2002, v ENG, Lord's 2003.

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21 - Eddie Barlow (RSA) v NZL, Durban 1961-62, v NZL, Wellington 1963-64

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Second to The Don



REUTERS, Melbourne

Test cricket's second leading run-scorer Steve Waugh is the best player Australia has produced apart from Don Bradman, Zimbabwe coach Geoff Marsh said on Friday.

"I think he has to be rated as one of the best, if not the best," Marsh told reporters in Perth.

"Obviously Bradman stands alone, but I reckon his record speaks for itself," Marsh said of his former teammate Waugh.

"His captaincy record is outstanding and his performance with the bat speaks for itself."

"All Stephen's hundreds in test cricket, they are all under pressure."

The late Australian great Bradman, widely regarded as the best batsman to play the game, hit 29 centuries and averaged an unrivaled 99.94 in 52 tests. He died aged 92 in February 2001.

Waugh is Test cricket's most capped player. The right-hander has hit 10,521 runs in 162 Tests at an average of 51.07 including 32 centuries, second only to former India captain Sunil Gavaskar's 34.

Waugh trails his former captain Allan Border by 653 runs as the game's leading run-scorer. Waugh is also the game's most successful captain with 38 victories from 51 matches.

Marsh, 44, and Waugh, 38, both

player in 1987 and as coach 12 years later.

Marsh said Waugh's dramatic last-ball century in the fifth Ashes Test in Sydney this year was one of the best hundreds he had seen.

"The other one was his hundred in the World Cup in 1999 in Headington, when we had to beat South Africa to get into the semifinals. Great knocks, inspirational, great for the game," Marsh said.

The Western Australian will coach Zimbabwe in October in a two-Test series against Australia.

"Our guys are so keen to get over here and to play against Steve, because he wasn't at the World Cup," Marsh said.

"They want to play a Test match against him... and after the game, have a chat to him. No one knows the game better than Steve does."

Australia named a "dream team" of the 20th century in January 2000, with Bradman as captain and Border as 12th man while Waugh was overlooked.

The Times of India newspaper reacted at the time with a headline "No S.Waugh in Aussie dream team."

made their test debuts in Australia's 1985-86 series against India.

A tough opening batsman, Marsh made 2,854 runs in 50 Tests at an average of 33.18 with four centuries. He also played 117 one-day internationals and enjoyed World Cup triumph with Australia as a

STEVE WAUGH

De Silva said the board was concerned about the amount of work that Vaas will have to put in for Hampshire, particularly in view of the England Test tour of Sri Lanka later this year.

Sri Lanka has no international engagements until England arrives in the island in mid November for a three Test and three one-day series.

Vaas, 29, who has taken 216 wickets in 68 Tests is Sri Lanka's most successful fast bowler.

Muralitharan made his first appearance Wednesday for his county Kent.

The pair have emulated the

present selector Aravinda De Silva who appeared for Kent with distinction in 1995.

Seeds sail

AFF, Los Angeles

Wimbledon runner-up Mark Philippoussis beat Michael Chang 6-2, 6-4 at the 380,000 dollar Los Angeles ATP event on Thursday to set up a clash with Brazilian hero Gustavo Kuerten.

Fifth seed Philippoussis needed just 30 minutes to win the first set then jumped out to a 3-1 lead in the second before the 16-year tour veteran Chang fought back to tie it at 3-3.

"Unless something is done quickly about it, the good name of the game that we all know will be mud," cricket's third highest run-scorer said.

"Just look at any school games anywhere in the world and we will see bowlers having a go at the batsmen. They see it on TV from their heroes and believe that it is a part of the game, and so indulge in it."

Lillee, who took 355 wickets in 70 Tests, said: "I don't know how much junior cricket he (Gavaskar) has watched in Australia! That's not right."

Verbal abuse and intimidation," Gavaskar said while giving the Colin Cowdrey lecture for 2003 at Lord's on Tuesday.

"But unfortunately most of these belong to a champion side (Australia) and it makes others believe that it's the only way to play winning cricket," added the former opener, who holds the world record for Test centuries with 34.

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All four seeded players in action on Thursday won their matches.

Second seed Sebastien Grosjean, fourth seed Kuerten and seventh seed Wayne Ferreira all advanced.

Philippoussis now holds a 5-4 career edge over Chang, having won the last five straight matches after Chang dominated him at the beginning.

At stumps, on the first day of the second Test, South Africa were 151 for one in reply to England's first innings 173 -- a deficit of just 22.

South Africa captain Graeme Smith, who hammered England for 362 runs in the drawn first Test at Edgbaston, was 80 not out.

"There are no excuses -- we just weren't good enough," said Vaughan, thrust into the Test captaincy after Nasser Hussain's shock resignation at Edgbaston.

Vaughan, 28, must have known it

was not going to be his day when he lost the toss.

"But we were going to bat anyway," said Vaughan who became

and the ball did a bit," added Vaughan, England's second top scorer with 33 behind number nine Darren Gough's 34.

Agassi, Roddick in qtrs



AFF, Washington

The 33-year-old American will face defending champion James Blake on Friday for a semifinal berth at the 600,000-dollar hardcourt event, an US Open tuneup. Blake, an American seeded sixth, beat Germany's Lars Burgsmuller 3-6, 7-5, 6-4.

Other quarterfinals send Britain's Tim Henman against Thai third seed Paradorn Srichaphan and fourth seed Fernando Gonzalez of Chile against seventh seed Max Mirnyi of Belarus.

Paradorn, who lost to Blake in last year's final here, ousted 80th-ranked American Brian Vahaly 7-6 (7/3), 6-4. Henman has won four of five career meetings with Paradorn.

"I take confidence from the record," Henman said. "Since those first three matches, he has come such a long way. On these type of courts he's very competitive."

Hot Roddick, unbroken in his past 40 service games, seeks his fourth title in six events and second title here in three years. Roddick won at St. Poelten, Queen's and last week at Indianapolis, downing Paradorn in the final.

"It's never easy, but I felt pretty comfortable. I took care of my serve early and settled into my game nicely," Agassi said. "I don't take him too lightly. You don't take much for granted. I still have to go out and execute."

Agassi, seeking his sixth title here but first since 1999, dominated the opening set and won the first eight points of the second to seize command on his way to winning in 58 minutes for a 6-0 lifetime lead on his friend and foe.

"It's always a little weird, but you always have a job to do," Roddick said. "It's not like I'm going to miss a forehand or not play as well because I'm playing a friend."

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He's probably the hottest player on the tour right now," Rusedski said.

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break of the match off Rusedski in the second game of the opening set, then won the only service point lost by the server in the tie-breaker to claim the battle of 149 mph servers.

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