

Thorpe not required

AFP, Sydney

Retired England Test batsman Graham Thorpe has been told by Australian Sheffield Shield champions New South Wales he's unlikely to play for them this season.

NSW coach Trevor Bayliss said 36-year-old Thorpe will only come under selection consideration after fringe players were given opportunities.

Thorpe, who made a century on his Test debut, against Australia at Trent Bridge in 1993, and scored 6,744 runs in 100 Tests at an average off 44.66, announced last month he would be quitting all first-class cricket at the end of the current English season.

The former England batsman quit Test cricket after being omitted from the squad for the first match of the recent Ashes series against Australia.

The Surrey left-hander is coming to Australia after Christmas to fulfil his playing contract with NSW after his retirement announcement.

"We are hoping he doesn't play as I have said before, and he is aware of that but we will have to see how the season pans out," Bayliss said Thursday.

Bayliss said the state team's major priority in the domestic competition was developing cricketers for the national team.

NSW captain and Test wicket-keeper understudy Brad Haddin said he would be surprised if Thorpe got a start.

"No, I can't see him playing, if we are doing our job there is no reason to pick him," Haddin said Thursday.

West Indies keep

FROM PAGE 16 appears to have paid for his stance. On that tour, Ganga easily scored the most runs for West Indies in the three 'Tests'.

WEST INDIES: Shiv Chanderpaul (capt), Tino Best, Dwayne Bravo, Corey Collymore, Fidel Edwards, Chris Gayle, Wavell Hinds, Brian Lara, Jermaine Lawson, Daren Powell, Denesh Ramdin, Marlon Samuels, Ramnaresh Sarwan, Devon Smith, Dwayne Smith.

Bracken set

FROM AGE 16

Bracken, who had a spell with Gloucestershire in 2003, said: "I have agreed personal terms with Worcestershire and will definitely be signing a contract for 2006.

"I had agreed to go back to Gloucestershire this summer but in the end they decided to look elsewhere for an overseas player.

"Worcestershire then stepped in and offered a contract for the first half of this season but I was unavailable then because I was getting married.

"But I am available for the whole of next summer and looking forward to having a successful season at New Road.

"The ball swings a lot in England and the wickets do a bit and any fast bowler is happy when the ball swings and seams."

Bracken is part of the Australian one-day squad for the current Super Series against the ICC World XI and was a key figure in New South Wales's victorious Sheffield Shield campaign.

Latvian GM for

FROM PAGE 16

We are going to start the fourth and the final phase for the national team under this programme."

The Latvian, whose salary would be 2,000 dollars per month, will train 12-14 top players of the country whose ratings is above 2300.

Bangladesh finished 41st in the last Olympiad in Spain.

To celebrate or not to...

REUTERS, Tresopolis



comical goal celebrations for Real Madrid.



DON'T MAKE ME LAUGH! Brazilian superstar Ronaldo (R) cracks a joke with teammate Roberto Carlos during a training session in Tresopolis on Wednesday. Brazil face Bolivia on Sunday in a World Cup 2006 qualifier in La Paz.

Cisse warns Rafa

AFP, Paris

Liverpool's France striker Djibril Cisse warned Rafael Benitez Thursday that he would leave the Premiership side if he did not get more first team action.

"When I'm lucky enough to start (with Liverpool) it's as a right winger. It's not my position but I do it for the team. If things don't sort themselves out by December I think I'll leave," said Cisse ahead of Saturday's World Cup qualifier against Switzerland.

Cisse, 24, said that he would most likely return to his former team Marseille in France, but would also like a move to Spain.

"I'd also like to go to Spain, but I think what I really want to do is leave Liverpool," he said.

"I'd be disappointed to leave Liverpool, I was beginning to adapt but I have to think about my career as well.

"Six months before the World Cup I can't be playing just one out of two or every three matches. It's a bit selfish, but I have to play."

Liverpool, meanwhile, were reported Thursday to have offered Real Betis 10 million euros plus Cisse for attacking midfielder Joaquin, sports daily As reported.

Cisse, who recovered from a broken leg to play in Liverpool's astonishing Champions League final triumph in May, has spent most of this season warming the bench after a mooted move to Marseille fell through.

Cisse, who has 23 caps for France and scored seven times for the national side, has not played for Liverpool since September 10.

He joined Liverpool from Auxerre for 14 million pounds (24.7 million dollars) last year.

Ronaldo, Roberto Carlos and Julio Baptista scored all four Real goals in the 4-0 win over Real Mallorca on Sunday and celebrated first by hopping up and down like kangaroos and then by playing leapfrog.

The previous week Ronaldo, Roberto Carlos and Robinho had caused offence to Alaves president Dimitry Piternan when they dived on to the ground and

waved their arms and legs about in a dance they dubbed 'the cockroach'.

"Sincerely, I didn't imagine anything like this and I'm surprised because I don't see any reason for a controversy," Ronaldo told reporters at Brazil's mountain retreat in Tresopolis.

"I have never wanted to offend anyone with my celebrations, but it seems to make some people uncomfortable.

"Maybe I'll stop celebrating, because I have never wanted to create problems... if it bothers a team mate, or if it bothers the club or if it bothers the national team, it's something I'll have to think about."

Roberto Carlos was equally perplexed: "I don't even want to hear about celebrations, I want to talk about football."

"Celebrations are part of football, everyone celebrates in the way he sees fit and it surprises me that people are talking about how we have to celebrate a goal.

"I spoke to my father and he said that in his weekend kickabout, everyone goes mad when they celebrate and nobody says anything," added the left-back. "It's rubbish to create a storm out of something which has no importance."

Captain Cafu, who plays for AC Milan, said he was in favour of eccentric celebrations.

"It's great," he said. "There are moments in the game when the player needs to get it all out, the tension and the stress of the game."

Brazil coach Carlos Alberto Parreira was indifferent.

"We are not worried about this," he said. "The Brazil team has always been a good example and the players have always known how to behave adequately."

"The goal is the best moment of football and they have to celebrate with happiness. But there are limits, just as there are in all aspects of life."

Time for a divorce?

REUTERS, Madrid

AC Milan vice-president Adriano Galliani says his club could leave their famous San Siro home and build a new avenue in the city.

"Our stadium is among the least worst in Italy, the pitch is magnificent, you have a good view from the stands, the majority of fans don't get wet if it rains and it is easy to get to."

"But the first level was built in 1926 and sharing with Inter Milan isn't easy. Inter's directors have different ideas to us and so maybe it is time to think of two new stadiums for the city of Milan," Galliani said in an interview with the daily Corriere della Sera.

Milan, formed in 1899, played at five different stadiums before moving to the San Siro in 1926 and were not joined by Inter until 1947.

Before moving in with their 'cousins' at the San Siro, Inter played at the Arena, in the centre of the city, which is the oldest venue in the world to have staged first class football having been opened in 1807 a century before Inter were formed.

The three-tier San Siro, which currently has space for 80,000 fans, was radically redeveloped for the 1990 World Cup finals and was the venue for the opening game of that tournament.

Although the World Cup allowed huge investment in stadiums across Italy, Galliani, who is also president of the Italian Football League, said it was not worth while.

"The error of 'Italia 90' was developing existing stadiums or building new ones with athletic tracks. That

was how we lost a historic opportunity," he said.

The Delle Alpi stadium in Turin was one of the new venues built for the World Cup but will be demolished next year to make way for a new venue for Juventus which will have a reduced capacity and no running track.

Italian clubs could have a second chance to get access to funds for stadium development with the country bidding to host the European Championships in 2012.

Attendances in Italy this season are down by 20 percent and while some, such as Football Federation chief Franco Carraro, have blamed ticket prices and crowd violence, Galliani says the stadiums are also to blame.

"All the club presidents agree with my view that the fall is without doubt related to stadiums that are obsolete and not designed for football," he said.

"You can't see much of the game, you have a bad view and if it rains you get soaked, as happened to 5,000 Livorno fans at Florence on Sunday who will have caught colds after watching the match in the pouring rain. We can't go on like this," he said.

"The way forward is to build new stadiums because the majority of the current ones are neither savable or able to be restructured," added Galliani who highlighted German club Schalke 04's AufSchalke Arena in Gelsenkirchen as a model.

"The Germans told me that they sell an average of 30,000 litres of beer for each game. In our stadiums you can't even get a cup of water," he said.

"It's obvious that as long as the stadiums are like this people will prefer to watch the game on television rather than go to the match," he added.

Ganguly to be examined today

PTI, Mumbai

Sourav Ganguly will meet Indian team physiotherapist John Gloster on Friday in Mumbai to seek advice on his injured elbow, Cricket Board sources said here Wednesday.

"Gloster would be reaching here from Adelaide Thursday night and would examine Ganguly on Friday," Board sources said.

Gloster would then proceed to Mohali for the October 10-13 Challenger Series for which the teams have been asked to assemble on October 8 evening, they added.

A top Board official said earlier in the day that Ganguly was to consult Gloster and the Board's Mumbai-based medical panel chief Dr Anant Joshi on his injured right elbow.

Ganguly, named to lead India Seniors in the limited-overs tournament, had injured his elbow during a practice game in Zimbabwe last month.

On Monday, Ganguly had consulted Kolkata orthopaedic surgeon Kalyan Mukherjee who advised him to undergo an MRI scan, and the report would be shown to Gloster when the player meets him, the official said.

Both Ganguly and Mukherjee refused to talk about the nature of the injury in Kolkata amidst speculation that it could be the early stage of tennis elbow, the affliction which has been troubling Sachin Tendulkar for more than a year.

Tendulkar underwent surgery in London to set right the problem and missed India's visit to Zimbabwe as well as the tour of Sri Lanka. He is scheduled to return to competitive cricket at Mohali after a four-month post-surgery lay-off.

Real still not finished article

REUTERS, Madrid

Real Madrid director of football Arrigo Sacchi says the Primera Liga club still has a way to go before it can be considered the best side in Europe again.

"The strongest clubs in Europe at the moment are Juventus and Chelsea. You may or may not like their football but they have a clearly defined approach to the game," Sacchi told sports daily Marca on Thursday.

"We are at a crucial moment, just coming out of a grey patch. We haven't established our shape yet, and are still adapting to changes in the squad."

The nine-times European champions have not won a major trophy in two seasons, and are on their fourth coach over the same period, as they look to return to winning ways.

The club invested heavily in the transfer market during the close season, spending close to 90 million euros (\$107.6 million) on new recruits such as Brazilian forwards Robinho and Julio Baptista, and young Spain defender Sergio Ramos.

"The potential of the side is enormous and the individual talents of the players are undoubted, but they don't always perform as a team," Sacchi continued.

"Vanderlei Luxemburgo is working hard to improve this, and the spirit within the squad. Raul or Michel Salgado said the other day Madrid's biggest rival is itself."

After a shaky start to their league and Champions League campaigns normal order appears to be returning.

Mirza reaches qtrs

Tennis

AFP, Tokyo

Nicole Vaidisova of the Czech Republic outshone her teenage rivals and the richer men's event to reach the quarterfinals of the the Japan Open tennis tournament here.

Fresh from her victory at the Korea Open last weekend, the 16-year-old second seed shrugged off a service

break deficit to beat Japan's Rika Fujiwara 6-4, 6-2.

Maria Kirilenko of Russia, 18, who posted her first career title at the China Open two weeks ago, outclassed Henrieta Nagyova of Slovakia 6-4, 6-2, while Tatiana Golovin of France, 17, breezed past Saori Obata of Japan 6-1, 6-4.

India's rising star Sania Mirza, 18, made quick work of another Japanese, Aiko Nakamura, 6-1, 6-4 to set up a

quarterfinal match against top seed Vera Zvonareva of Russia.

Zvonareva downed Shahar Peer of Israel 6-3, 7-5 earlier in the day.

Despite her win, Vaidisova was unhappy with her performance.

"I don't feel good about today's match. I didn't play well, I have to improve, so definitely I'm not happy with the way I played," she said after the 67-minute match.

"I don't know why I played so bad today, especially at the start. I made too many unforced errors, I just didn't get into my rhythm today. After 4-3 down, I just tried to stay calm, focus and play."

"I just needed to stay calm, try to hit the shots I usually do and it paid off. Today, it was enough, but you don't know what's gonna happen the following couple of days," she said.

Mirza, who became the first woman from India to clinch a WTA title, winning in her home town of Hyderabad in February, aggressively attacked Nakamura's short balls and weak serves. She raced to a 4-0 lead and never faced serious trouble afterwards.

"I thought I played a good match. I had a solid start to the match in the first set. In the second set, she picked up her game, but I think I played well when it mattered on the important points," Mirza, the eighth seed, said.

Meanwhile, unseeded American Jill Craybas eliminated sixth seed Gisela Dulko of Argentina 6-3, 6-3 to earn a place against Kirilenko.

There were upsets in the men's event with former Japan Open champions, Rainer Schuetler of Germany and Kenneth Carlsen of Denmark, losing.

Schuetler, the 2003 winner, bowed out to seventh seed Jarkko Nieminen of Finland 1-6, 1-6 in the second round, while 2002 champion Carlsen, seeded 10th, went down to Bjorn Phau of Germany 1-6, 2-6 in the third round.



Tatiana Golovin of France returns the ball to Saori Obata of Japan during their second round match of the Japan Open in Tokyo yesterday.

Henin crashes

Tennis

AFP, Filderstadt

Top seed Lindsay Davenport successfully began her title defence at the 650,000-dollar WTA Grand Prix event as reigning French Open champion Justine Henin-Hardenne fell at the first hurdle here on Wednesday.

Davenport eased through her second round tie with Italy's Francesca Schiavone 6-2, 6-2 as Henin-Hardenne lost 6-4, 6-3 to Flavia Pennetta, another Italian ranked outside the top 20.

The fourth seeded Belgian has hardly been herself since her exhausting triumph in winning at Roland Garros in June.

She has recently been suffering from a hamstring problem, and was playing her first match since the US Open.

She made a brief fight of trying to save the first set but the match ran away from her in the second, as she slipped quickly to 0-5 with the 23-year-old from Brindisi hitting the ball with far greater penetration than her former opponent.

Henin-Hardenne made a rally to 3-5 and looked as though she might take it further, but at 30-all a net cord set up an easy Pennetta attack to earn a match point. Henin-Hardenne then served a double fault to lose it.

"Of course she played well but I was not at my best level," said the Belgian.

Pennetta next plays Daniela Hantuchova, who also upset the seedings.

Her match was delayed for 20

minutes by a power failure, but afterwards the Slovakian made up for lost time, continuing her surge into the top 20 with an impressive 6-4, 6-3 win over the seventh-seeded Patty Schnyder.

Against Schnyder the right things were to keep on the offensive as much as possible, denying an opponent whom Hantuchova called "the most talented on the tour" too many chances to purvey her varieties of spins and angles.

World number two Davenport, who won the Wismalak International in Bali only two weeks ago, admitted that she still felt "devastated" by the horrors which happened so soon after she left.

"One of the explosions happened within 200 feet of where I was staying. I walked by that restaurant every day. It is very difficult to take in," Davenport said.

"I am devastated by what has happened. I got to know some of the people there and they were saying that things were just starting to pick up again there, and now something else happens."

As if fate was determined to rub the Indonesian tragedy into Davenport's memory, she now found her first match since then was a repeat of the Bali final.

She was nevertheless even more effective than she had been in the Far East show-down, this time winning against Schiavone, the Italian who had taken six games off her then.

Davenport also belied the fact that she has been suffering from a persistent back injury which had originally decided her against playing here.

Beijing Games eco logo unveiled

PTI, Beijing

Organisers of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games have unveiled its new environmental logo to represent the city's effort to conduct a 'Green Olympics'.

The symbol, which was created using a calligraphic art form, is composed of human and tree-like shapes.

The logo depicts the crown of a tree and the shape of a human being in the form of a large tree reaching the sky.

The image represents harmony and unity between human beings and nature. Just like swinging coloured strips that encircle and cross each other, the green lines form a luxuriant crown of a tree and recall flowers in full bloom, embodying the sustainable development of nature, the organisers said on Wednesday.

Speaking during the logo unveiling ceremony, Executive Vice-President, Beijing Organising Committee for the 2008 Games (BOCOG), Liu Jingmin said that the environmental goals of BOCOG needed not only the support of the government but is also depended on the participation of the public.

He said the new symbol was an important step in BOCOG's educational work to encourage more citizens to participate in activities to support the 'Green Olympics'.

The 2008 Beijing Olympic Games scheduled from August 8, will play host to the 28 summer sports currently on the Olympic programme.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS 25 Jog 40 Swamp 12 Blue hue 26 Year-end 41 — 14 Finds 23-Down 15 "Unden-ably" 19 Pack away 20 Weeding implement 21 Far-reaching 22 Implanted 23 Arithmetic results 24 Hurricane-zone purchase 25 Upper surface 26 Symbols of servitude 28 Former head of the DHS Tom — 29 Sea 30 Ernie and Gomer 31 Despot 32 French possessive 34 Coral structure 35 Part of T.A.E.

DOWN 1 Conflagration 2 Ethereal 3 It's the least you could do! 4 "The Bells of St. —" 5 Upright 6 A-line creator 7 October birthstone 8 Lab rats' challenges 9 On the schedule and 10 "The Greatest"

Solution time: 21 mins.

B	T	O	S	H	A	M	M	A	D	E
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O	E	A	N	S	C	H	A	I	R	E
F	A	R		M	A	Y		U	A	R
F	A	I	R	E	S	T	P	A	R	T
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I	M	P	A	I	R	E	D	O	M	E
N	E	A	I		E	N	D	S	I	N
A	N	N	E	S	T		S	T	E	W

CRYPTOQUIP

T K N V A Y H S K H Y X W L S H S

O X Y L X K Y H T W V I H S N Z

I N O S H T S V , D Y J B Y J U Z B N U U

T W W A S D S N V W B Y N V W

Yesterday's Cryptiquip: FRIDAY I WAS FIRED AS THE DINER'S WAITER. GUESS YOU COULD SAY I WAS GIVEN THE BOOTH.

Today's Cryptiquip Clue: S equals E

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.

The heat is on

FROM PAGE 16 World skipper Shaun Pollock is expecting a big turnaround from his players in the pivotal game after only four batsmen broke double-figures -- Kumar Sangakkara with 64 off 96 balls and Ashes hero Andrew Flintoff's 38 being the best performers.

"It's not that you lose, but in the manner you lose and for us to be seven or eight down for not much at all was probably the most disappointing part about tonight's game," Pollock said.

"You have to give them the opportunity to fight back. But it's not really about team selection, it's about mentally that we come out all prepared and do the job well and that's the biggest challenge for us."

Meanwhile, West Indian Chris Gayle will replace Pakistan's Shahid Afridi in the ICC World XI line-up.

A team spokesman said Thursday Gayle was part of a 12-man team from which a super sub will be confirmed before the toss.

Australian captain Ponting, who has received most of the stick from the Ashes loss, summed up the team's fighting mood after Wednesday's win.

"We've all worn a bit and copped a bit since we've come back about the way the team performed in England, which some was fair and some was a little unfair," he said.

"This has been the first chance we've had to show the cricket-loving public of the world just how good a cricket team we are.

"We've come up against a very good team and we've outplayed them comprehensively. I'm very proud about the way the guys have approached this game, but we've set a benchmark that we have to keep up to all the time."

Australia also have made one change to their team for the second Super Series one-day, bringing in Stuart Clark for Glenn McGrath.

Cricket Australia said New South Wales paceman Clark will make his debut, becoming the 153rd player to represent Australia in the one-day international arena.

CA said McGrath will be rested after pulling up with tightness in the legs.

TEAMS

AUSTRALIA: Adam Gilchrist, Simon Katich, Ricky Ponting (captain), Damien Martyn, Michael Clarke, Andrew Symonds, Michael Hussey, Shane Watson, Cameron White, Brett Lee, Nathan Bracken, Stuart Clark (super sub to be named)

WORLD XI (from): Shaun Pollock (captain), Brian Lara, Shoaib Akhtar, Rahul Dravid, Andrew Flintoff, Chris Gayle, Jacques Kallis, Muttiah Muralitharan, Kevin Pietersen, Kumar Sangakkara, Virender Sehwag, Daniel Vettori (super sub to be named)

Umpires: Rudi Koertzen (RSA) Darrell Hall (AUS)

Video umpire: Aleem Dar (PAK)