

Boycott's MBE goes to his cat!

CRICINFO, *undated*

After Shane Warne sledged Paul Collingwood on the third day at the SCG for being "awarded an MBE for scoring 7 at The Oval", Geoff Boycott weighed in to the debate over the honours awarded to the England side in 2005.

"For 18 years England haven't won ... Australia have been beating England every two years home or away," he said on his BBC podcast.

"Suddenly, when England win, all hell breaks loose. They all get gongs at the palace. It just shows how foolish it was when they come out here two years later and are absolutely annihilated."

"I scored 8,000 runs and played a hundred Tests before I got one (Boycott was awarded the OBE in 1980) and what did he score? Seventeen runs? And the others played five Tests to get one? I feel so bad about mine I'm going to tie it around my cat. It's a joke."

"Andrew Flintoff, who's a super player, Marcus Trescothick who's played a lot of Tests and done well, Michael Vaughan as the winning captain. But every Tom, Dick or Harry?"

India lose

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the ball looped off his glove to AB de Villiers at first slip.

Tendulkar was paddled up but was told by match officials that he could not bat until another six minutes had elapsed.

The South African fielders asked whether Ganguly, who had to get ready instead, should be timed out but it was ruled that special circumstances applied because fourth official Murray Brown had only arrived in the Indian dressing room to inform them of Tendulkar's situation one ball before Jaffer was second man out.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at the end of India's second innings on the fourth day of the third and final Test against South Africa at Newlands on Friday:

INDIA: First innings 414

SOUTHAFRICA: First innings 373

INDIA: Second innings

Jafer c De Villiers b Ntini 2

Sehwag c Boucher b Steyn 4

David c and b Harris 47

Ganguly c Gibbs b Kallis 46

Tendulkar lbw b Pollock 14

Laxman run out (Pollock) 1

Karthik not out 38

Kumble c Gibbs b Steyn 6

Zaheer run out (De Villiers) 1

Sreesanth c Kallis b Steyn 4

Patel c Pollock b Steyn 0

Extras: (lb-5, nb-1) 6

Total: (All out in 64 overs) 169

Fall of wickets: 1-6, 2-6, 3-90, 4-114,

5-115, 6-121, 7-147, 8-165, 9-169.

Bowler O M R W

Ntini 8 1 29 1

Steyn 7 0 30 4

Pollock 15 5 24 1

Harris 22 6 50 1

Kallis 12 0 31 1

Kabaddi team

FROM PAGE 17
mat for its court at the Outer Stadium from the government, the BFK has yet to provide the mat for its players, who had to remain satisfied with bronze medals in the 10th South Asian Games and the Asian Games last year.

The squad have been training at the taekwondo mat.

The squad: Ziaur Rahman, Mojammel Haque, Mosharrif Hossain, Abu Musa, Yunus Ahmed, Abdur Rouf, Kamal Hossain, Raju Ahmed, Mamun and Tariqul.

Figo signs

FROM PAGE 20
would be arriving on January 5.

But the Italian champions dismissed that report and insisted they would hold on to the former World and European Footballer of the Year at least until his current contract runs out at the end of June.

Figo has played little under Inter coach Roberto Mancini having retired from international football after Portugal lost to France in the World Cup semifinals in July.

Hewitt's coach

FROM PAGE 20
Russian Igor Kunitsyn at the Adelaide Invitational.

Hewitt was seen looking accusingly at Rasheed throughout that match and it is believed the pair had an argument immediately after the loss.

"This is the hardest decision I've ever had to make, but one I felt I had no choice but to make," Rasheed said.

"Within the current environment, I don't believe it is possible for us to get the results we are looking for."

Rasheed is Hewitt's third coach since he turned professional.

Unlike predecessors Darren Cahill and Jason Stoltenberg, who both gave family reasons for quitting, Rasheed said family had not played a part in his decision and added he would be happy to coach another player.

In his statement, Rasheed said he still felt Hewitt could win another grand slam.

"I believe in Leyton as a player and still believe he's capable of winning grand slams, but I feel the only way I can make a positive change to his environment, and mine, is to walk away from one of the great coaching jobs," he said.



PHOTO: AFP

Nadia Petrova (L) and Dmitry Tursunov of Russia hold the Hopman Cup and diamond balls which they won after defeating Anabel Medina Garrigues and Tommy Robredo of Spain in both singles finals at the XIX Hopman Cup in Perth on Friday.

Russia win Hopman Cup



Tennis

AFP, Perth

said it was great to continue his country's impressive form in international team tennis.

"It is really nice for our country," he said.

"After Fed Cup and Davis Cup, I don't know if there are any more to win."

With victory within reach, Tursunov recovered from a break down in the second set to clinch the title with a 6-4, 7-5 win in 88 minutes.

Robredo was able to save one match point in the second set, but Tursunov produced a clinical backhand down the line to earn another as an anxious Petrova watched on.

Tursunov then appeared to claim victory with a crunching crosscourt forehand that a stretching Robredo could only float into the net, but the Russian had to wait for the Hawkeye electronic system to review the call.

The review showed the ball had just caught the outside of the line and was good, confirming Tursunov's win.

Tursunov, ranked 15 places below Robredo at 22nd in the world, had been very disappointing in as many meetings with the 27th-ranked Medina Garrigues.

Petrova's serve gave her six aces, while Medina Garrigues managed just one.

The Spaniard spent most of the match just scrambling to stay in points and throwing up defensive lobs and as a result hit just two winners, while Petrova reeled off 19, of which 12 were produced by her forehand.

Petrova said Medina Garrigues had been a tricky opponent and that her own form had been very pleasing.

"She stands very close to the base line and she plays with very heavy spin," she said.

"It is very difficult to do something."

"What I basically had to do is push her behind the baseline as far as possible and try and find a short ball to finish it off, it was working great."

"Unfortunately when I had to serve at 4-2 my nerves kicked in and it didn't work out."

"At the beginning of the season you have to go through it again and learn how to manage your nerves and I'm very happy that I could manage it."

The women's singles was a one-sided affair, with Petrova having few problems giving her team a perfect start to the tie with a straight

sets win over Medina Garrigues in 64 minutes.

Petrova, ranked sixth in the world, breezed through the first set without dropping a game and her only hiccup came when she handed back a break to the Spaniard in the second set, but she recovered to win 6-0, 6-4.

It was her second easy win in as many meetings with the 27th-ranked Medina Garrigues.

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This is better, says Holding

CRICINFO, *undated*

England's 5-0 drubbing may have been their first at the hands of the Australians for 86 years, but the last occasion came much more recently than that.

In 1984 and 1985-86, England slumped to ten defeats out of ten against the mighty West Indians, and Michael Holding was an integral member of the legendary four-man pace attack that doled out those beatings.

But, Holding told Cricinfo, the pride that his men felt in inflicting back-to-back "blackwashes" would be nothing compared to the jubilation in the Australian dressing-room at present.

"I don't think there's a serious comparison," he said. "Australia must feel a lot better about this 5-0 than West Indies about theirs, because the Ashes means so much to Australia, and of course England."

"Having lost in 2005 this was a big comeback for them. The embarrassment of losing has spurred them to these great heights. It's difficult to fight back when you are being overwhelmed on a regular basis," said Holding, who took 249 wickets in a 60-test career that included 31 wins and just eight defeats. "After Adelaide I thought it would be 5-0."

"This was a team with a double-centurion, a player with a big 150 and a bowler who took seven wickets, and they still lost. What more could they have done to win a Test match? How could they come back from that? When you have been down trodden it is difficult to lift yourself, and I never expected England to lift themselves."

Holding refused to compare the current Australian team with the great West Indian sides of his day, saying that times have changed and so too has the game. But, he added, he did not believe that Ricky Ponting's Australians were quite the same force as Steve Waugh's side four years ago.

"When Waugh was captain, he had Shane Warne and Glenn McGrath at their very best, and Jason Gillespie at his very best," said Holding. "I think it was a better bowling attack, and bowlers win matches."

The irrepressible leg-spinner

wasn't the only one to shrug off the loss. Glenn McGrath, Justin Langer and Michael Hussey were all over after a never-a-dull moment 15-year playing career.

Asked at his final press conference as a cricketer if he will suffer from "spotlight withdrawal", Warne fired: "I doubt it."

"I tell you what. Hopefully, it'll keep people off my front lawn for a while. Following me a round in cars, all those type of things," he said.

"Hopefully, that will die down. I won't miss that at all. Maybe I can get my gear off and down on top of a bar if I want to."

The irrepressible leg-spinner

is in far better shape to withstand the retirements of Shane Warne, Glenn McGrath and Justin Langer than it was 23 years ago, Warne said Friday.

The trio of Test greats bowed out as winners in Australia's thumping 10-wicket victory over England in the final Sydney Test to clinch the first 5-0 Ashes series whitewash in 86 years.

Australian cricket fell into a black hole, winning just seven of their ensuing 46 Tests following the seismic retirements of Greg Chappell, Dennis Lillee and Rodney Marsh after the fifth Sydney Test against Pakistan in January 1984.

The parallels are obvious with the departures of three influential members of the contemporary Australian team, but Warne said the conditions now compared to then were completely different.

"Obviously, at that stage there were a couple of international sides which were very, very good. And they were three great players for Australia," Warne said.

"The West Indies were a very tough side to even touch at that stage."

"At the moment, we're a long

Warne won't miss it



Cricket

AFP, Sydney

Shane Warne doubts he will suffer from "spotlight withdrawal" after his farewell from Test cricket in Australia's overwhelming 10-wicket fifth Ashes Test win over England here Friday.

World cricket's dominating personality signed off with a top-scoring 71 in Australia's first innings of 393 and took the psychological wicket of captain Andrew Flintoff to put England on the skids in their second innings shambles.

The incomparable leg-spinner claimed two wickets in his final Test to finish his 145-Test career with 708 wickets at 25.42, the most wickets by any bowler.

Never one to shirk publicity, good or bad, the 37-year-old Warne is relieved it's all over after a never-a-dull moment 15-year playing career.

Asked at his final press conference as a cricketer if he will suffer from "spotlight withdrawal", Warne fired: "I doubt it."

"Yes, it will be hard to replace that stuff. But, you just find a way to do whatever you have to do."

Warne is bullish about the future of Australian cricket without the likes of Glenn McGrath, Justin Langer and himself.

"I don't think Australia will come back to the field. They'll replace us three guys and I'm sure Australia will

keep playing good cricket and winning," he said.

"We've won 16 out of 17 Tests. I bought a print for 35,000 dollars that was 16 in a row, so hopefully it rains in a couple of the (Australia's) next Tests. Maybe I'll have to buy the next one when they win 17," he quipped.

"When we won 16 in a row, I didn't think it would happen again. To be on the verge of doing that again, won 16 out of 17, that's an amazing journey and a testament to the quality of players we've got."

Australia will get that opportunity when they take on Sri Lanka and India over six Tests at home from next November.

"It'll be interesting to see which way the selectors go. Will they go for some 30-year-old players to replace us, or will they go for some youth?" he said.