

## 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

FROM PAGE 17  
the ball looped off his glove to AB de Villiers at first slip.

Tendulkar was padded 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:

<b>INDIA:</b> First innings 414	
<b>SOUTH AFRICA:</b> First innings 373	
<b>INDIA:</b> Second innings	
Jaffer c De Villiers b Ntini	2
Sehwag c Boucher b Steyn	4
Dravid 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.	
<b>Bowler</b>	<b>O</b> <b>M</b> <b>R</b> <b>W</b>
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 BKF 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, Mojammeel Haque, Mosharrar 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 Lleyton 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



AFP, Perth

Russia added another team title to their growing collection when they won their first Hopman Cup by beating Spain in the final of the unique mixed teams event here Friday.

The top-seeded pairing of Nadia Petrova and Dmitry Tursunov was far too good for the Spanish duo of Anabel Medina Garrigues and Tommy Robredo.

The Russians, who were pre-tournament favourites but had to recover from dropping their first Group A tie to Australia, wasted little time claiming the title with straight set wins in both singles matches.

Petrova outclassed Medina Garrigues while the big-hitting Tursunov produced clearly his best singles form of the week to overpower a plucky Robredo, who was chasing his second Hopman Cup title after teaming with Arantxa Sanchez Vicario in 2002.

The Russians claimed a pair of diamond-encrusted tennis balls and a cheque for 250,000 Australian dollars (195,000 dollars) and Petrova could barely believe her good fortune.

"I cannot believe we are holding these balls," she said.

"They way we started here, we were not thinking it would end up this way, but it ended up great.

"Dmitry really showed heart today."

Tursunov, who helped Russia win its second Davis Cup recently,

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 singles losses to Mark Philippoussis and Mardy Fish earlier in the tournament.

However, he was at his best against Robredo, hitting 29 winners to Robredo's 13.

Robredo looked set to level the match when up a break in the second set, but Tursunov then lifted his game again.

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.

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."

## 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 downtrodden 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 of 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."

## 3 more booters

FROM PAGE 17

The players are expected to join training at the BUET ground today and will switch to the Army Stadium from tomorrow.

They will get the chance to play a preparation match against South Korean club Ulsan on February 2 in Dhaka. The Asian giants, who earlier visited Bangladesh to play an AFC Club Cup match against Mohammedan, will arrive on January 30.

## Martyn snub

FROM PAGE 17

team, in the best interests of him. The team had to get on and win the Ashes and the right thing for him was to stay out of all of that, which is what he has done. He felt to continue on at that point would have put the team at risk and the whole Ashes campaign at risk."

Jones added that stories Martyn has not spoken to any of the team were also untrue. "This nonsense about not communicating ... he has been in touch with everybody. He has texted people, talked to players, they have had some laughs. That's just a myth."

## Ronaldo's latest

FROM PAGE 20

Madrid before heading to Paris to see in the New Year together.

The lovebirds are now back in Madrid where Ronaldo has hired a dentist's surgery specifically for Abreu to finish his treatment.

O Globo claimed Ronaldo had wasted little time since splitting from Brazilian top model Raica da Oliveira, who lives in New York, in September.

He has dated a string of Brazilian beauties, marrying footballer and model Milene Domingues before moving in with another top model, Daniela Ciccarelli, while still married to Domingues.

That ended after only 63 days together as Ciccarelli headed back to Brazil claiming the striking superstar had cheated on her.

## No more

FROM PAGE 20

were lacking a certain stability, we had difficulty in constructing our game," he added.

Bayern had 11 players at the World Cup finals and some of those, such as Frenchman Willy Sagnol and Germans Oliver Kahn, Lukas Podolski, Philipp Lahm and Bastian Schweinsteiger, only started training again two weeks before the season began.

Bayern have lost four times already this season, including three times against modest opponents. They were also knocked out of the German Cup by Aachen.

"We want to ensure we play better, the reasons for our poor displays will disappear," said Magath, who will put his side through tough physical preparation in the Gulf.

"If we play to our potential we are without a shadow of doubt the best team in Germany and we will prove it in the second half of the season," said Dutch striker Roy Makaay.

Bayern's first match after the winter break takes place on January 26 against Borussia Dortmund.

# Warne won't miss it



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."

"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 dance on top of a bar if I want to."

The irrepressible leg-spinner

intends playing more poker, snooker and golf in his increasing spare time away from big-time cricket.

"I'm a pretty competitive person, so playing poker will be up there. Pool or snooker, golf. I will have the odd wager on the golf course," he said.

"Nothing can replace the opportunity to play for Australia. To get out there with a group of guys to try and achieve something -- the beauty of a team sport."

"The things that we go through as individuals off the field can be quite tough. Without the help and support of your teammates, it's really tough to get through sometimes some of the things you have to deal with in your personal life."

"Some of us are exposed a lot more in the press than others, but that's the way it is."

"I've made some wonderful friends. It's all about friendships for me. Friends I've played with in Australia and that I've played against -- Sachin Tendulkar, or Brian Lara or Andrew Flintoff -- that's what it's about."

"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

# 'Exodus won't hit hard'



AFP, Sydney

Australian cricket 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

way ahead of the next best side. As you can see, England are rated the next-best side and to win five-nil -- you can't be any more comprehensive than that."

"So there is a good gap between Australia and the next best side. That's not being arrogant, that's just the facts."

The incomparable 37-year-old leg-spinner, who finished his 145-Test career with 708 wickets at 25.42, said Australian cricket was in great shape.

"First-class cricket in Australia is a good breeding ground for talent to come in and play. There's some wonderful cricketers out there," he said.

"It's a good time to get some younger players into the Test side, while it's been so successful, and there is a decent gap between the next best side."

"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."

McGrath, Test cricket's leading fast bowler with 563 wickets in 124 Tests, was content in his retirement decision.

"I guess if you had to write the script for the perfect ending, obviously to get a wicket on your last ball of Test cricket is the perfect way to do it," he said.

"It will hit me more later down the

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.

"It's a good time to get some younger players into the Test side while it's been so successful and there is a decent gap (to) the next best side."

"At the moment, we're a long way ahead of the next best side. As you can see, England are rated the next-best side and to win 5-nil, you can't be any more comprehensive than that."

"So there is a good gap between Australia and the next best side. That's not being arrogant, that's just the facts."

track. When I saw that ball go up and Mike Hussey was underneath it I was pretty happy, a perfect way to finish."

McGrath, whose wife has fought breast cancer, said there would be no change of heart.

"I think we're retired from Test cricket. There will be no comebacks. It's time for the young guys to step forward now. I think Australia's in a very healthy position, so there won't be any calls next year for us to come back."

Opening batsman Langer said he was relieved his 105th and final Test was behind him.

"Talk about the perfect finish, I said to Haydos (Matthew Hayden) in the last over, 'Mate, I'm getting a bit emotional here, how about a six and a one to finish it,'" Langer said.

"As he ran past (England captain) Freddie Flintoff he said 'the little fella doesn't want much, he wants a six and a one."

"Next thing you know, bang! A six and a one and then you actually realize it was all over. It was an amazing moment in my life. That's probably the perfect script, to be there when the winning runs are scored with my opening partner, 5-0 up in a Test series."

Langer finished Test cricket with 7,696 runs at 45.27 with 23 centuries, and is the 20th all-time leading run-getter in Tests, and sixth all-time Australian.

# Freddie looks to 2009



AFP, Sydney

England captain Andrew Flintoff told his players Friday to use the humiliation of losing the Ashes in the first series whitewash for 86 years as motivation for their next series with Australia in 2009.

The all-round admitted he was hurting after leading England to a 5-0 drubbing but pointed to the way Australia came back after their shock Ashes loss in 2005 culminated in wild English celebrations at The Oval in London.

"I've heard the Australians speak about watching on at The Oval, they used that as a spur for this series we've just played in," Flintoff said.

"For 2009, I'm sure that's something the lads will remember, it gives us the spur on for that series."

"You look at our room and, conceivably, every one who's played in this Test match could play in 2009."

Flintoff was at a loss to explain England's failure in Australia, where the tourists are yet to win a match since arriving in early November.

He said the world's number two ranked Test side suffered a collective loss of form just when it needed to lift against the relentless Australians.

"It's not through lack of practice or lack of wanting to do it," he said.

"We've probably been fortunate for a while that as a group we've all performed well together and it's inevitable players will lose form from time to time -- there's been quite a few of us who've done it at the same time."

"When you come on a tour like this, that just can't happen, you've got to be on the top of your game."

The tour started badly for England when their most experienced batsman Marcus Trescothick returned home suffering a stress-related illness before the first Brisbane Test.

Andrew Strauss failed to fill the void, averaging just 24.7 runs for the series and strike bowler Steve

Harmison was wayward from his opening delivery at Brisbane's Gabba, which flew to a startled Flintoff at second slip.

England contrived to concede the next Test in Adelaide from a seemingly unseemable position on the final day and Australia capitalised on their opponent's morale-sapping defeat to dominate the rest of the series.

England now go into a triangular one-day series involving Australia and New Zealand with question marks over Flintoff's captaincy and Duncan Fletcher's future as coach.

The pair was criticised as overly defensive for selecting spinner Ashley Giles over Monty Panesar and wicketkeeper Geraint Jones instead of Chris Read in the early Tests, with both replacements performing well when finally given their chance.

But Flintoff argued Australia had taken Test cricket to a new level in demolishing an England side that arrived Down Under "quietly confident" it could retain the Ashes.

"We knew it was young and slightly inexperienced but that was one of the exciting things about it," he said.

"Going out for that first Test match at the Gabba, we thought we could do something special out here, but we came up against a side who have been magnificent for five Tests."

Flintoff said there would be an extensive review after the side returns to England in an attempt to draw positives from what has been a nightmare tour.

"I know we've been beaten 5-0, but it can't be a pointless exercise," he said. "I think it's a young side and as long as we've learned something from this going forward."

"Some of the lads have scored runs and had success against them, showing that they can compete against the best in the world."

Flintoff said he would speak with England chairman of selectors David Graveney over the next few days about whether he would remain captain for the one day series,

with Michael Vaughan expected to resume the skipper's role after an injury-enforced absence.

Flintoff said his immediate priority was relaxing after a gruelling Test series.

"I'm going to have a day off, it's been intense stuff for six weeks. I'm going to have a day off. I'm not going to worry about bowling plans for field positions or scoring runs. I'm just going to relax," he said.

## I'm satisfied

FROM PAGE 17

Ponting described the Ashes series as the one of the best periods of his 11-year cricket career.

"For all the guys to stand up and perform as they have through this period and for myself to make a few runs and feel that I led the side pretty well has been enjoyable."

"I think it's important that we all enjoy today and the moment for what it is."