

## Ivanovic sent crashing

AFP, Montreal

Reigning French Open champ Ana Ivanovic was sent crashing out of the WTA Rogers Cup, losing her third-round match to unseeded Austrian Tamira Paszek 6-2, 1-6, 6-2 on Thursday.

Top seed Ivanovic dropped her first two service games against Paszek to fall behind 4-0 in the final set. She also lost three service games in the opening set before winning the second.

"It was very frustrating because I didn't know how it was going to pull up; I was in pain through the whole match," Ivanovic said.

"The pain wasn't so sharp but I couldn't hold my racquet on my forehead."

"I tried to fight as much as I could. I really wanted to win this match. But obviously she's a very good player. She figured it out."

Paszek avenged a 7-5, 6-1 loss three years ago in Linz when she was just 14-years-old. Paszek is ranked 94th in the world.

"The first thing I was thinking was, 'Well girl, you made it. It's over now,'" Paszek said.

"The second thing was that it was the first top 10 player I've beaten. I've had a lot of chances before and played some great matches but never did that. It was also the first night match I won in my career."

"So there were a lot of first times today. I don't know how, but I managed it."

The 17-year-old Austrian will face the No. 11 seed Victoria Azarenka of Bulgaria, who moved on after unseeded Frenchwoman Virginie Razzano retired while trailing 7-6 (7/4), 2-0 in the hardcourt tournament.

## Tanvir wants to prove in Tests

CRICINFO, undated

Pakistan fast bowler Sohail Tanvir was the Indian Premier League's (IPL's) most successful bowler but he has said that it is in the Test arena that he really wants to prove himself.

"If you are ranked as a player, it is solely based on your performance in Tests," Tanvir told Gulf News. "The one-day and Twenty20 versions are meant to entertain the crowds who come to watch sixes, boundaries, catches and wickets. I am comfortable in all forms of the game, but it is Test cricket that I would love to prove myself now."

Tanvir has played only two Tests so far in his career, making his debut on Pakistan's tour of India in 2007-08. He had tremendous success with the Rajasthan Royals, who bought him for \$100,000, during the IPL. He took 22 wickets in 11 games at an average of 12.09 and economy-rate of 6.46 and held his nerve during the IPL final against Chennai Super Kings to score the winning runs off the final ball.

"I know I am worth much more," he said. "And based on my performances, I think I can easily get a million dollars, if not more. I have two or three very lucrative offers from other IPL franchises, but there is time for me to make a decision for next year."

## Academy boys

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the seniors to achieve the target in 35 overs and they completed it off the last ball.

Pacer Shahadat Hossain, Forhad Reza and spinner Mahmudullah Riyad claimed two wickets each to dismiss the academy boys cheaply.

Imrul Kayes top-scored with 37 for the Academy team which will leave Dhaka for South Africa on August 4 to play two four-dayers and three one-day matches against their South African opponents.

After the match, two former national captains Khaled Mashud and Habibul Bashar briefed the Academy players about the South African conditions.

## Thousands

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The eclipse was expected to start at 0923 GMT in Canada, and was expected to last two hours, although the total eclipse would only be two minutes long.

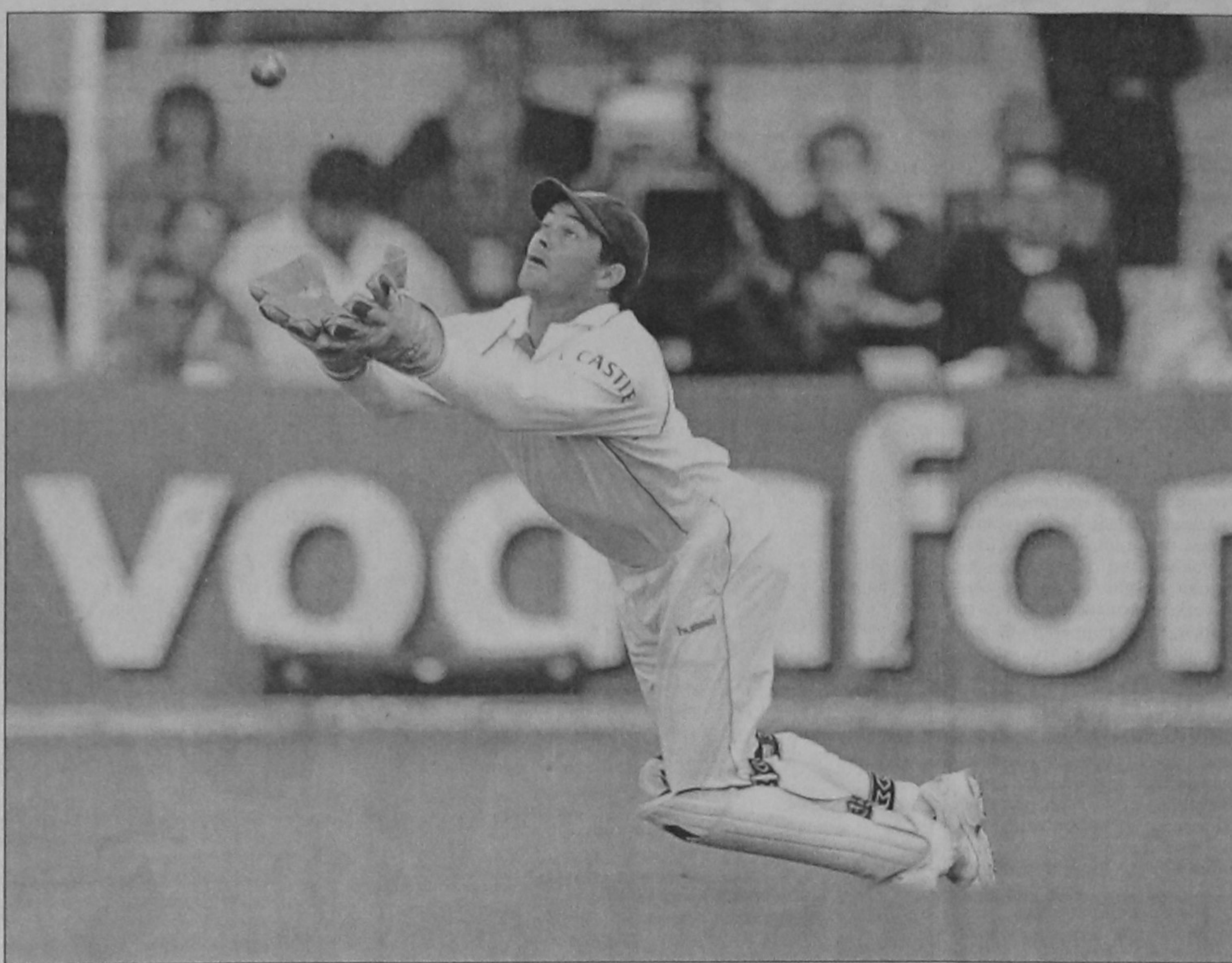
It was due to cover 10,200 kilometres in that time, and extend across northern Greenland, the Arctic, central Russia and Mongolia, before ending in northern China around 1120 GMT.

Foreign tourists had also come to see the eclipse, Xinhua said, with at least 500 foreign travellers in Yiwu and Jiayuguan, a city in neighbouring Gansu province, where the eclipse was also expected to be highly visible.

The next solar eclipse in China will take place on July 22, 2009, Xinhua quoted astronomers as saying.

A total solar eclipse is caused when the moon blots out the sun by passing directly between it and the earth, and has traditionally been associated with misfortune.

Astrologers and feng shui experts have recently said the eclipse might spook the superstitious one week ahead of the Games but Chinese authorities have no reason to fear for the Olympics.



BOUCHER'S BRILLIANCE: South Africa wicketkeeper Mark Boucher takes a superb diving catch to remove England opener Alastair Cook (not in picture) during the third day of the third Test at Edgbaston in Birmingham on Friday.

## The Freddie factor

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

An emotion-fuelled hour of the most intense Test cricket imaginable hauled England back into contention on the second day at Edgbaston, as South Africa faltered in the face of a furious onslaught from Andrew Flintoff.

Flintoff and England awoke to caustic headlines in the national press, and rightly so, given the abject nature of Wednesday's batting effort. Their first-innings total of 231 was at least 200 runs below par after winning a crucial toss, and by the time South Africa had chiselled their way to near-parity with six wickets still standing, their hopes in the series were receding with every passing minute. But in England's hour of need, up stepped Flintoff, with a spell that might not have propelled them back into the ascendancy just yet, but has without doubt transformed the dynamics of this match.

"It was an important hour for us, wasn't it," said Flintoff. "We'd scrapped all day, but we needed to get wickets to get back in the game. It means a lot to us, getting back into the series, and doing well for England, and we'd not scored enough in the first innings. A lot of hard work was needed, which meant everyone getting involved and making an impression. I think we've done that today (Thursday)."

Flintoff's close-of-play figures of 4 for 68 are already his best in Test cricket since his annus mirabilis of 2005, with the promise of more to come when play resumes on Friday morning. But it was a measure of his magnificence that he could and should have reaped even greater rewards.

## KP revives England

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had made centuries in the first two Tests, drove at a wide ball from Ryan Sidebottom in the second over of the day to be caught behind for 39.

Andrew Flintoff, whose fiery spell late on the second day brought England back into the game, was denied his fifth wicket of the innings in the next over when Boucher, on 12, was dropped by Paul Collingwood, diving far to his right at second slip. The ball would have gone straight to the fielder if a third slip had been in place.

The second new ball was taken but Morne Morkel batted brightly to make 18 before he was leg before wicket to James Anderson, to be followed almost immediately by Andre Nel, who was bowled by an in-swinging delivery from Sidebottom.

With last man Makhaya Ntini at the crease, Boucher went for his shots and hit three fours in an over from Sidebottom. He managed to keep the strike when he hooked the last ball of the over to long leg where Monty Panesar spilled a chance before he struck Anderson high towards deep cover where England captain Michael Vaughan pulled off a spectacular diving catch.

Having struck with his second ball of the match to remove Graeme Smith, Flintoff needed three attempts to see off Neil McKenzie -- after a drop from Paul Collingwood and a reprieve-by-referral after Andrew Strauss's low catch at slip -- before Aleem Dar delivered the not-out verdict that lit a furnace of indignation within the most mild-mannered of strike bowlers.

Incredibly, closely followed by incandescence, was Flintoff's reaction when Jacques Kallis, on 55, was struck flush on the toe, plumb in front of middle stump, and with the bat not even close to the action. He appealed, then pleaded, then demanded, and at the end of the over, could still be heard giving Dar an earful as the pair moved to their positions at squareleg.

Flintoff's reaction was entirely out of character, and he quickly apologised at the close, but as Kallis would testify, he backed up his furious words with even more livid deeds. "My emotion was running quite high," said Flintoff, "but you can chunter as much as you want, you've just got to get on with it. When you're bowling to one of the best players in the world, and Kallis is right up there, it brings the best out of you. It was probably one of my better overs."

Flintoff has always been a master of understatement, but he can only really judge the value of his onslaught at the end of the South African innings, when the final four wickets have been picked off and the true balance of power has been laid bare. But, with memories of last South Africa-England confrontations thick in the air, in particular the Donald Atherton clash at Trent Bridge in 1998, it was left to the vanquished batsman, Kallis, to assess the true worth of Flintoff's spell.

"Any time you get good battles in Test cricket it's good for the game," he said. "People say that with Twenty20 around Test cricket is going to die, but I don't think it's anywhere near dying. People are still coming to watch it and you get exciting afternoons like that, what

more do you want?"

"He bowled a fantastic spell and it brought England back into the game," said Kallis. "There's still a bit in the wicket and he got it in the area more often than not, which made life tough for our batters. It's not the first time we've faced a spell like that, but when a bowler bowls a spell of world-class quality, you've just got to try and work through it, and fight and hang in there."

Kallis was unable to tough it through, as his off stump was detonated by a perfectly pitched outswinging yorker, but when AB de Villiers fell three overs later to a loose pull to fine leg, a bristling Mark Boucher arrived to shepherd South Africa to the close with Ashwell Prince solid on 37 not out at the other end. There were plenty sharp words exchanged in the dying moments, however, particularly after Boucher lost sight of another yorker that fizzed past his off stump.

The light, as Kallis said, was not the issue. More of a problem was Flintoff's height, which allowed his stream of full-length deliveries to burst unnoticed out of the darkened windows of the committee room above the sight-screen. Kallis admitted he did not see the ball that ought to have claimed him lbw, and had little idea of the "good nut" that eventually did for him, but added that he hoped that "common sense would prevail" and that the umpires would ask for a sheet to cover the offending gap. Morne Morkel, who will have watched the drama with interest, might not take too kindly to that sort of suggestion.

Regardless of Flintoff's efforts, Kallis remained confident of South Africa's position at the end of the second day, and with Boucher already primed for the sort of scrap that his career has been built around, England also know how much can be won and lost in the first hour on Friday. But for now they are happy merely to be back in contention. After the drubbing at Headingley and their batting embarrassment, pride -- however temporarily -- has been restored.

Strauss c Kallis b Morkel	25			
Cook c Boucher b Ntini	29			
Vaughan c Amla b Nel	17			
Pietersen not out	42			
Bell c Boucher b Ntini	20			
Collingwood not out	9			
Extras: (lb-1, w-3)	4			
Total: (For 4 wickets in 37 overs)	126			
To bat: Flintoff, Ambrose, Sidebottom, Anderson, Panesar.				
Fall of wickets: 1-15, 2-39, 3-70, 4-104.				
<b>Bowler</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>W</b>
Morkel	8	1	28	1
Nel	9	2	39	1
Ntini	7	0	31	2
Kallis	8	2	15	0
Harris	5	1	12	0

## BCB plans

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Premier League. The National Cricket League (NCL) will start from October 8 with six divisions playing the country's lone first-class competition.

"We are thinking to introduce longer-version cricket in the Premier League in spite of having four-day competitions in NCL because we will be benefited as we play the longer-version cricket," said Ashraf.

## Biplob posts easy win

SPORTS REPORTER

Biplob Ram was one of five National Tennis Complex players who won during yesterday's play in the Dhaka Open tennis competition in Ramna.

Ram defeated Ritu Raz 6-1, 6-2, Jamil crushed Monir 6-0, 6-0, Taslim beat Joy of Naogaon 6-1, 6-2, Mizan defeated Marzuk 6-1, 6-0 and Ranjit defeated Russell 6-1, 6-1 as they moved into the third round.

In other matches, Lal of Nordic Club beat Naogaon's Sohan 6-2, 6-2, Shahnewaz of Hotel Sarina beat Niloy Rahman 6-2, 6-2 and Bashir Gazi of the same organisation beat Shafayet 6-2, 6-0.

Meanwhile, eight first round matches and four in the final round were decided in the Boy's Under-14 division yesterday.

## Media Cup football

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Chittagong

The first-ever Press Club A&J Media Cup Football begins tomorrow here at the MA Aziz Stadium.

A total of eight teams comprising of journalists of print and electronic media houses are taking part in the tournament, organised for the first time in the port city by the Chittagong Press Club.

Red, Green, White, Black, Yellow, Blue, Sky and Orange are the team names in the nine-a-side meet.

On the first day, Green team will take on Black.

The remaining matches will be held in the morning. The duration of the matches will be 50 minutes in total including a 10-minute break.

Badal Roy, former national footballer and vice-president of Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF), will be present as chief guest in the opening ceremony while Ekramul Karim Chowdhury, managing director of A&J Group and executive member of BFF, will inaugurate the tournament.

The final will be held on August 7.

## Sharapova

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is so powerful that an Internet search brings up over seven million results.

She is also a global brand off court, raking in an estimated 25 million dollars from endorsement deals so far.

But it is also a cruel blow for Sharapova herself. When she announced she would play at the Olympics, she said: "It has been a dream of mine ever since I was a little girl."

"One of the things I'm really looking forward to is the opening ceremony and walking with athletes from my country in front of thousands of people."

With the three-time Grand Slam champion's withdrawal, Serbian superstar Ana Ivanovic will be the centre of attention after claiming the number one spot and the French Open title in Paris.

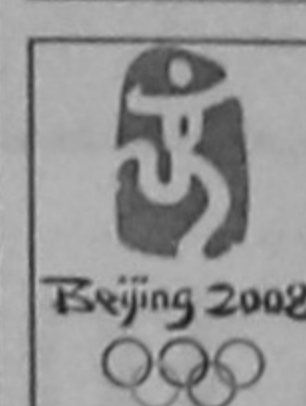
But with defending champion Justine Henin's shock retirement in May, and plenty of different winners already this year, the event is unpredictable.

Serbia's Jankovic holds the second ranking and Serena Williams will look to join a role of honour which includes her sister Venus, the current Wimbledon champion, by claiming the only major title to elude her.

The Games tennis event starts on August 10.

## China relax censorship

AFP, Beijing



China on Friday rolled back a few high-profile planks of its Internet censorship system in an apparent effort to defuse an embarrasing dispute over media freedom just days ahead of the Olympics.

Journalists arriving here to cover the Beijing Games have found that access to a wide array of Internet sites, including Western news organisations and human rights groups, were banned.

But after talks between the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and Beijing authorities on Thursday, several sites were unblocked.

The previously barred websites of human rights group Amnesty International and press freedom organisation Reporters Without Borders were easily accessible on the Chinese Internet system on Friday.

The BBC Chinese service and German broadcaster Deutsche Welle, similarly blacklisted previously, were also accessible.

The lifting of Internet curbs appeared to go beyond Olympic venues, with AFP reporters able to consult those normally banned sites from an ordinary Chinese Internet portal.

Amnesty and Reporters Without Borders said their sites could also be viewed by ordinary Chinese

elsewhere in Beijing and in other cities.

However many sites were still blocked, including those linked to Chinese dissidents, the outlawed Falungong spiritual movement, the Tibetan government-in-exile and sites with information on the 1989 Tiananmen massacre.

The easing of some curbs follows a week of controversy after China backtracked on a pledge to allow the more than 20,000 foreign reporters covering the Games complete access to the Internet.

The IOC was embarrassed by China's decision, after its president, Jacques Rogge, promised last month that foreign reporters would have unfettered Internet access.

IOC spokeswoman Giselle Davies on Friday welcomed the lifting of restrictions on some of the sites deemed sensitive, such as that of leading human rights group Amnesty.

"It's a good thing," she said. The IOC said it had pressed China to open up Internet access in talks on Thursday with the Beijing Olympic organising committee (BOCOG) and Chinese authorities.

Following discussions the IOC held with BOCOG and Chinese authorities regarding difficulties experienced this week in accessing some web sites, the IOC is pleased to see that the issues are being quickly resolved," Davies said.

"The media should be seeing a noticeable difference in accessibility to websites that they need to report on the Olympic Games."

Amnesty and Reporters without Borders also cautiously welcomed the decision to unblock their sites.

"We welcome the news today that the authorities have lifted blocks on our website in the Olympics media venues and possibly elsewhere in Beijing," said Roseann Rife, deputy director for Amnesty's Asia-Pacific Programme.

"However, arbitrary blocking and unblocking of certain sites does not fulfil the duty to comply with international standards of freedom of information and expression."

BOCOG spokesman Sun Weide said some Internet sites remained blocked but insisted that China would guarantee "sufficient" Internet access to allow journalists to do their job.

"Some sites are blocked under Chinese law, but I do not have further information on which," he said.

Reporters Without Borders has described China as an "enemy of the Internet." The watchdog says at least 50 people are being held in Chinese jails for online activities deemed inappropriate by authorities.

China's communist rulers are known to operate an extensive Internet censorship system that blocks information they view as improper, unhealthy or a threat to its rule.

Experts say more than 40,000 Internet police are employed to implement the so-called "Great Firewall of China."

## Mankad passes away

Cricket

AFP, Mumbai

Former India Test batsman Ashok Mankad died in his sleep here on Friday aged 61, cricket officials said.

Mankad, regarded as a shrewd thinker of the game and one of India's finest domestic captains, played 22 Tests between 1969 and 1978 and scored 991 runs at an average of 25.41.

His record in first-class cricket was more impressive as he scored 12,980 runs at an average of 50.90 before retiring in 1982-83. He scored 44 in his only one-day international, against England at The Oval.

"Indian cricket lost one of its stalwarts when Ashok Mankad passed away early on Friday," Indian cricket board secretary Niranjan Shah said.

"He was a gifted batsman, an outstanding captain, and a respected cricket guru. An individual who dedicated his life to the sport, he will be missed by every



ASHOK MANKAD

single follower of cricket in this country," he said in a statement.

Board president Sharad Pawar said the country had lost one of its sharpest cricketing brains.

"Mankad had a great cricketing brain and was regarded by one and all as a great tactician," he said.

"His contribution and records in domestic cricket are unmatched."

The middle-order batsman, son of legendary Test all-rounder Vinoo Mankad, is survived by his wife

Nirupama, a former national tennis champion, and two tennis-playing sons Mihir and Harsh.

Mankad also served as manager of the Indian cricket team in 1982-83 and coached first-class sides like his native Mumbai, Madhya Pradesh, Railways and Baroda.

Former India left-arm spinner Bapu Nadkarni said Mankad could not fulfil his potential because he was promoted as an opener.

"He was a wonderful batsman but he was not allowed to fulfil his potential because he was converted into an opener for which he was not well equipped," Nadkarni told AFP.

Former India captain Ajit Wadekar also said Mankad could have done better had he continued as a middle-order batsman.

"He could have done better had he continued to play in the middle order. He was a great reader of the wicket and opposition."

"He was a perfect team man who kept his mates in good humour in the dressing room," Wadekar said.

## Bhajji leads fightback

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fours in his 231-ball knock.

The Indian batsmen, especially Sehwa, were involved in an engrossing duel with Sri Lanka's unorthodox spinner Ajantha Mendis (6-117), who took a maiden haul of five or more wickets in an innings in only his second Test.

Sri Lanka then got a dose of their own medicine as they were jolted by Harbhajan, who had Warnapura caught by Gautam Gambhir at short point and then held a return catch to account for Sangakkara.

Harbhajan then bagged two wickets in the space of four balls when he trapped Thilan Samaraweera (14) leg-before and had Tillakaratne Dilshan caught by a diving Gambhir at short-leg.

Warnapura exploded with a flurry of boundaries early in the innings, hitting left-arm seamer Zaheer Khan for four successive fours. He struck one six and 10 fours in his third half-century in six Tests.

The runs came thick and fast as Sangakkara also executed handsome shots against pace and spin, hitting nine fours in his 26th Test half-century.

He gave a chance immediately after completing his fifty, but wicketkeeper Dinesh Karthik failed to hold the catch off Harbhajan.

India's other wicket-taker was Zaheer, who had Vandort (four) caught by Rahul Dravid at third slip before Sangakkara and Warnapura

steadied the innings.

India's batting in the morning revolved around Sehwa, who kept dominating the Sri Lankan attack despite the fall of wickets from the other end. The tourists lost their last six wickets for 51 runs.

Sehwa, 128 overnight, alone succeeded in solving the Mendis puzzle with his aggressive approach, lofting the bowler for two sixes. He received support only from Venkatesai Laxman (39), extending the fifth-wicket stand to 100.

Mendis, who took just two wickets for 74 runs on Thursday, came back strongly to ensure Sehwa-inspired India did not post a big total. He gave away just 43 runs for his four wickets in the morning.

"He (Mendis) is a very good bowler and has got lot of variations. Bowlers like him are good for the game," said Harbhajan.

The Indian cricketers wore black armbands in memory of former Test batsman Ashok Mankad, who died in Mumbai on Friday.

Sri Lanka lead 1-0 in the three-Test series after winning the opening match by an innings and 239 runs in Colombo.

**SCOREBOARD**

Scoreboard at stumps on the second day of the second Test between India and Sri Lanka at the Galle International Stadium on Friday:

INDIA: First innings (overnight)

214-4	Gambhir lbw b Mendis	56
Sehwa not out	201	
Dravid c Warnapura b Mendis	2	
Tendulkar lbw b Vaas	5	
Ganguly c P Jayawardene b Vaas	0	
Laxman c Samaraweera b Mendis	39	
Karthik lbw b Mendis	7	
Kumble st P Jayawardene b Muralidaran	4	
Harbhajan lbw b Mendis	1	
Zaheer c P Jayawardene b Muralidaran	2	
Sharma lbw b Mendis	10	
Extras: (b-1, lb-4, w-7)	12	
Total: (All out in 82 overs)	329	
Fall of wickets: 1-167, 2-173, 3-178, 4-178, 5-278, 6-290, 7-317, 8-318, 9-323, 10-329.		

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Vaas	19	2	74	2
Kulasekara	8	1	40	0
Mendis	28	1	117	6
Muralidaran	27	1	93	2

**SRI L**