SPORT

CRICINFO, undated

Australia will almost certainly enter the series finale in Sydney next week with a vastly inexperienced attack after learning Brett Lee faces a month out of the game due to a foot injury. Lee has been out of form and was unable to improve his series figures of 1 for 200 when the problem kept him off the ground for the entire third day against South Africa at the MCG on Sunday.

Lee has what the team physio Alex Kountouris described as a stress reaction -- "on the way to being a stress fracture" -- in the fourth metatarsal in his left foot. While there is a chance Lee could bowl in the second innings, it could take as little as one ball to turn the small crack into a stress fracture and a four- to six-week layoff is probably required either way.

"I don't think he'll be able to play the Sydney Test, Kountouris said. "We'll wait and reassess at the end of the game but if he's got what we think he's got and it's been confirmed by scans that he's got a stress fracture, it'll probably mean we're going to have to rest him for a period of time to let it settle. We'll probably get a specialist opinion but it will be something between four and six weeks I think."

That would rule Lee out of Australia's ODIs against South Africa and New Zealand and would mean a potential return in the Test series in South Africa that begins in late February.

Kountouris said the injury was caused by overuse and was not uncommon in fast bowlers. Lee has also had problems with his left ankle and has had four operations on the joint, the most recent of which kept him out of last year's World Cup.

Lee's lack of penetration has been a concern against South Africa and he leaked 68 runs from 13 overs as the pain increased throughout the second day at the MCG. Losing him for the Sydney Test would take the heat off the selectors to justify his inclusion but it would also leave Mitchell Johnson in charge of a young attack. Michael Clarke, the vice-captain, said a lack of Test experience in the bowling group would not be a major worry.

"I think I look at it the other way," Clarke said. "I remember when I got my opportunity to play Test cricket, it's a great feeling and you really look forward to that day and I think whoever -- if somebody does come in for Brett Lee -- I know they'll be looking forward to that opportunity and hopefully they can get hold of it with both hands.

Peter Siddle and Nathan Hauritz are each in their third Test and the candidates to replace Lee include the uncapped Ben Hilfenhaus, who joined the squad after the WACA loss. The Sydney local Doug Bollinger will also come into the equation, as will Shane Watson, who filled in as 12th man while Lee rested in Melbourne.

Atouba to quit Hamburg

AFP, Berlin

Cameroon international Thimotee Atouba is to quit Hamburg at the end of the season, according to the German club.

Atouba, currently recuperating from a ruptured Achilles tendon, turned down an extension to his contract which expires at the end of this season.

"He has not accepted our offer," Hamburg general manager Dietmar Beiersdorfer told Bild newspaper. "We cannot do anything against that and our offer is now no longer standing."

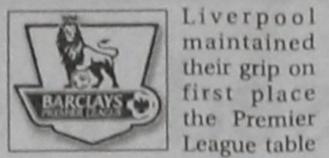
Atouba, 26, arrived in Hamburg from English Premiership club Tottenham and has played 81 Bundesliga matches.



In 1971 American astronaut Alan Shepard became the first man to hit a golf ball on the moon.

Lee headache for Australia Five-star Liverpool

AFP, Newcastle



the Premier League table with a stunning 5-1 win against a toothless Newcastle

Gerrard scored twice and had had it not been for Newcastle goalkeeper Shay Given, the hosts could have been on the wrong end of a double-figure disaster after being completely outclassed.

Republic of Ireland international Given made five world-class saves in 10 minfrom total capitulation before the midway point of the first-half.

his run of jaw-dropping stops in the 10th minute as he pushed away a fierce near post strike from lone Liverpool forward Dirk Kuyt.

Within a minute England midfielder Gerrard weaved his way around three United defenders only to see his left foot shot palmed away by lock in the 31st minute when

had only just begun and in the 14th minute the Magpies No 1 tunity to reprise his heroics denied Gerrard again as he sprung to his right to claw stranded again five minutes

away a rising left footed shot.

But that stunning save was Liverpool eclipsed by an even better of the Newcastle penalty area maintained show of agility five minutes to head home Gerrard's cortheir grip on later as Given denied the ner. Brazilian midfielder Lucas from point-blank range.

When the former Gremio player saw his header, from a Gerrard corner, beaten away United here at St James' Park by the Newcastle goalkeeper moments later, the visitors Reds captain Steven must have begun to fear this would be no easy win on

barely managed to break beyond halfway and the shalf-time by heading in Danny Magpies' owner, Mike Ashley, must have been wondering whether he had been premature in announcing his decision to take the club off the utes to prevent Newcastle market for the foreseeable future.

in a period of calm at St James' The Arsenal target began Park, the effect had not extended to the pitch. Liverpool continued to

> appeared to end the game as a minute. Inevitably, given his sensational start to the match, it was

Gerrard who broke the deadhe drilled Yossi Benayoun's However, the onslaught passin off the post. Poor Given had no oppor-

and the Irishman was

later when defender Sami Hyypia was given the freedom

The experienced Finn could have grabbed a second three minutes before the break only for a diving Given to push the ball into the path of Newcastle's Charles N'Zogbia, who cleared.

These were torrid times for United but, incredibly, Canada international United, for their part, had defender David Edgar reduced the arrears on the stroke of Guthrie's corner.

Liverpool's third, five minutes after the restart, had an element of luck about it, with referee Mark Halsey failing to spot Lucas's hand ball, but Dutch international If his aim had been to usher Ryan Babel tapped-in from five yards despite being surrounded by several Newcastle

press forward at will and two ond from Lucas's astute goals before half-time through ball in the 66th

And when substitute Xabi Alonso wrapped things up with a well taken penalty 13 minutes from time with Gerrard off the field, after his fellow replacement David Ngog had been brought down by Edgar, Liverpool could celebrate heading into 2009 on top of the Premier League pile.

Newcastle off market

Football

AFP, Newcastle

English Premiership club Newcastle United is no longer for sale, owner Mike Ashley said Sunday after failing to

find a buyer. The billionaire sportswear magnate has decided to push ahead with his own plans for the club following a fruitless three-month campaign to find an interested party.

Ashley engaged the services of investment bank Seymour Pierce after deciding to call it a day at St James' Park in September following mass protests against his regime in the wake of Kevin Keegan's departure as manager.

Ashley said in a statement September I made a point of

batting we lost early wickets and

it set us on the back foot and so it

has proved a happy hunting

ground for the McCullum-

Ryder pairing as they backed

up from an unbroken 165-run

stand in a one-day match

against England here earlier

against the West Indies after

New Zealand won the toss

included 24 off one Fidel

Edwards over and put the

home side on target for an

New Zealand marked three

milestones in Gayle's first

over, starting with a single to

McCullum to bring up his 50, a

four to Ryder for the 100 part-

nership and then a single to

through in his next over when

he had McCullum caught by

But Gayle made the break-

McCullum's dismissal,

Ryder for his half century.

ground level for 59.

innings well in excess of 200.

Their spectacular opening

The Seddon Park wicket

was difficult to get 191.

on the club's official website: "I am happy to end the uncertainty the fans may have had about the future direction of Newcastle United.

"I know just how important that is to you.

"I have withdrawn Newcastle United from the market, and for me 2009 will be the year in which we drive the club forward together.

"Even when I haven't been at games I have remained a keen supporter, kicking and heading every ball and cheering the team on TV and being first to congratulate (manager) Joe (Kinnear) whenever there's a good result."

Ashley revealed the club had failed to find a suitable buyer.

"When I took the decision to put the club up for sale in saying two things were very important.

"Firstly any potential buyer would have to show they had the best interests of Newcastle United at heart and had both the commitment and finance to be worthy custodians of such a fine football club before I would even consider doing a deal.

"And secondly, I gave you my word that as long as I remain owner, this club would continue to be run responsibly at all levels. I hope you will accept that I have stood by that pledge."

Ashley launched a 134.4million-pound takeover of the club in May last year and has since invested around a further 100millon pounds in servicing the debt burden and attempting to strengthen the playing squad.

NZ, WI separated at last when Franklin, the only New after a 34-ball innings which Zealand batsman apart from included six fours and four sixes triggered a New Zealand

fall in 51 balls for 61 runs. Ross Taylor was out for six in the next over to a stunning catch when he clouted Jerome Taylor for what seemed a certain six only to be caught on the boundary by a diving

collapse that saw nine wickets

Xavier Marshall. Gayle, who had Ryder dropped by Shawn Findlay with his fourth ball, found success in his second over when the bighitting left-hander was caught by Ramnaresh Sarwan at longonfor62,

dropped on nine when Pollard put down a sitter, notched up seven fours and three sixes from the 41 balls he faced.

New Zealand continued to lose wickets at regular intervals and went six overs without a boundary before James Franklin took two sixes and a Shivarine Chanderpaul at four off Suleiman Benn in the moves to Queenstown for the penultimate over. Benn had the final say

McCullum and Ryder to reach double figures, was caught by Findlay at long-off for 20.

The West Indies were rocked at the start of their run chase when Gayle went for one off Ewan Thompson's second delivery in international cricket.

Gayle hooked a delivery from the New Zealand debutant over midwicket and was caught by Jacob Oram on the boundary.

Marshall went in the seventh over for 10 and Chanderpaul was out for five, Ryder, who had been leaving Sarwan (53) to hold the innings together at the top.

> Denesh Ramdin and Kieron Pollard produced a rollicking 68-run stand at the end of the innings before both fell in Jeetan Patel's twowicket maiden that ended the match.

The West Indies tour now first of five one-day internationals on Wednesday.

Gerrard grabbed his sec- Liverpool defender Sami Hyypia (2nd from R) scores the second goal against Newcastle United during their Premier League match at St Still a long way to go

Football

England football legend Paul Gascoigne's 12-year-old son said in comments published Saturday that he thought his dad would likely "die soon" and wished that he would "go away" from the family.

James' Park on Sunday.

Gazza's son

wishes dad

to go away

AFP, London

Gascoigne has battled alcoholism and depression since his playing days -- earlier this year, he was sectioned under British mental health laws and arrested on suspicion of causing criminal damage in separate incidents.

"If I could wish, I would wish that he would go away from us," 12-year-old Regan Gascoigne told a documentary to be broadcast on Channel Four television on January 5.

"He's probably going to die soon," he said, in comments published in the Daily Mirror tabloid.

Gascoigne -- known to fans as "Gazza" -- made 57 appearances for England, and played for clubs including Newcastle, Tottenham, Lazio in Italy and Glasgow Rangers.

Considered one of the most talented players English football has ever produced, he is best known for his exploits in the 1990 World Cup finals in Italy where he helped his country to reach the semifinals.

As good as

FROM PAGE 17 Samaraweera on strike with two fuller-length deliveries and then played the one-two card by beating his outside

edge with a good length ball. Not quite game over for the gutsy right-hander who then went on to miss Mashrafe's final fling another full ball that jagged in after pitching and hit middle and off-stump.

No matter how genius this performance was, the air around Mashrafe was of inevitability. Maybe his daily brilliance is spoiling us and the man himself doesn't seem to understand that this, 14-4-24-2, was a work of art.

about this big manager the last game against (Ramsey) but we have to wait. Germany we played very well. He's up here -- I'm still down The first 11 was new players,

AFP, London

Fabio Capello insisted on Saturday that he does not yet deserve to be compared to Sir Alf Ramsey, the man he hopes to emulate by transforming England into world-beaters. Ramsey coached England

to their only World Cup success back in 1966 but Capello's impressive first year in charge of the national squad already has many observers tipping the Italian's team as champions in South Africa in 2010.

plenty of work ahead if the England of Rio Ferdinand, John Terry, Theo Walcott and Wayne Rooney are to be kings of the world.

"Someone spoke to me

here," said Capello.

at the level of Sir Alf Ramsey -- it won and this is very important is difficult and very, very long." Capello has overseen a

dramatic improvement in

the national team's fortunes in 2008. qualify for Euro 2008 under Steve McClaren, England have reached the end of the year on course for the World Cup finals

the qualifiers. For good measure, they But Capello says there is ended 2008 with a 2-1 friendly win over Germany in Berlin with their only loss in the year coming against France.

"It's been step forward, step forward," Capello said.

"I'm very happy because

some players who hadn't "It's a very long way to arrive played a lot of games, and we for the future.

PHOTO: AFP

"We had another (stepping) stone for the future."

Capello added that, unlike McClaren, he was determined After the low of failing to to maintain barriers between himself and his players.

"It's not important to play cards or games with the players. It's not important to me to be boasting a perfect record in one of the lads," said the Italian.

"The important thing is respect. I always say a manager is one against 24 always -there is one boss, one leader being judged by 24 players, in every moment he is under scrutiny and it's important the players know that is my role. The leader is the leader."

Mahela pleased

FROM PAGE 17

performance but he had to say something about the election but he has very little knowledge about the facts.

"What I know is that two women are running in the polls. Actually I'm not a huge MJayawardene not out follower of politics," said Javawardene.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at stumps on the third day of the first Test between Sri Lanka and Bangladesh at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur on Sunday:

SRI LANKA: First innings 293 (Samarweera 90, Shakib 5-70) BANGLADESH: First innings (overnight 177-9) Tamim cWarnapura

b Muralidaran Imrul c P Jayawardene

bVaas Zunaed b Muralidaran Ashraful c Dilshan b Vaas Rokibul b Prasad Mehrab c M Jayawardene b Herath

Shakib c M Jayawardene b Muralidaran Mushfigurnotout Mashrafelbwb Muralidaran 0 Shahadat st P Jayawardene b Muralidaran Mahbubul c Warnapura b Muralidaran

Extras: (b-4) Total: (Allout in 60 overs) 178 Fall of wickets: 1-44, 2-68, 3-90, 4-95, 5-117, 6-158, 7-162, 8-162, 9-176.

Bowler Vaas 0 61

OMRW

By Eugene Sheffer

carelessly 36 Glum

10 Osso

meat

11 House-

37 Listener

38 Response

41 "Funged-

daboudit!"

astic, plus

out-

pouring

Down,

supple-

ments

bender

result

lead-in

51 Carter

Muralidaran 22 8 49 6 12 Herath 1 29 SRILANKA: Second innings Vandort b Mashrafe Warnapura Ibw b Mahbubul 8 Sangakkara c Mushfiqur b Mehrab

Samaraweera b Mashrafe 62 Extras: (b-6, lb-5, nb-6, w-2) 19 Total: (For four wkts in 85 overs)

Fall of wickets: 1-16, 2-18, 3 153, 4-291. To bat: Dilshan, Jayawardene, Vaas, Prasad, Herath,

Muralidaran. Bowler 4 24 14 9 88 31 66

Mahbubul Shakib Shahadat 0 29 Mehrab Rokibul 0 24 Ashraful

Reduced

FROM PAGE 17 against England and only one five-wicket haul in his last 12 Tests but even without many wickets, he has enhanced his reputation.

His opponents dread his exaggerated reverse swing, a factor which was enough to win him his first man of the series award on home soil with returns of eight wickets at 21 runs apiece in the two-Test series against England. Most are now inclined to

compare him with the legendary Wasim Akram of Pakistan in his prime.

Real after Valencia

AFP, Madrid

Spanish giants Real Madrid are keen to sign Ecuadorean international winger Luis Antonio Valencia, As newspaper reported here on Sunday.

The 23-year-old Wigan Athletic star has become Real's preferred target after they dropped their interest in Aston Villa's Ashley Young and having pulled out of a deal for Liverpool's Jermaine Pennant because of his wage demands.

Valencia -- scorer of three goals in 20 matches this term -- would cost Real 17.5million euros and they could face stiff competition for the former Villarreal player from several of Wigan's Premier League rivals.

Real -- who are fifth in the title race some 12 points adrift of Barcelona -- are in desperate need of reinforcements to their squad after several key players such as Ruud van Nistelrooy and Malian midfielder Mahamadou Diarra suffered season ending injuries.

They have already signed French international midfielder Lassana Diarra from FA Cup holders Portsmouth for 20million euros.

Duminy does a miracle Prasad Dilshan Amlac Symonds b Johnson 19 (39) heaved to deep mid-on. memorable innings, which FROM PAGE 17 Kallis c Haddin b Hauritz 26 There were misfields, scampered towards three ended when bowled by Siddle, De Villiers b Siddle penalty runs for hitting an figures. He spent half an hour 1 Galva-

relief when he cut Peter Siddle through gully for four, raised both arms and kissed his but they took significant time within two metres of a Steyn Steyn b Siddle helmet badge. His teammates lined up to cheer as they wondered at the effort that gone into the recovery. Duminy appeared fresh despite staying throughout

in the 90s -- not that the time

mattered -- and there was

the day, facing 340 balls and hitting 18 fours, including fine cover drives from Siddle and Mitchell Johnson after his century. A sweep to Hauritz (3 for 98) lobbed to Siddle to extinguish the excellence and Duminy left the ground with people lining up to congratulate him.

retired hurt after being struck

on the left hand by Johnson,

continued to expand on his

personal best. His peak came

when he hit Johnson for two

straight drives for four and

took 191 balls and included nine fours and the six off

add 261 runs on the third day, away from Ponting's team, which needs a victory to level Ponting is unlikely to be generous with a target following the WACA, although he might be left with no option with only six sessions remaining. However, these scenarios rely order performing strongly.

If the batsmen copy the effort in the field South Africa will own the series by Tuesday. The same attack that was so Steyn, who could have potent on day two was able to manage only one wicket -- the No. 9 Harris -- in the first four hours. It was Michael Hussey, the most casual of part-timers, who broke through the 67-run stand that started the revival, mirrored the shot off Siddle to with Johnson taking a fine bring up his half-century. His running catch when Harris

unused helmet, overthrows and missed catches, including Not only did South Africa Ponting dropping Steyn on 32. Poor Hussey could not get shot that went straight up and followed the path of the sun, the three-match contest. and Hauritz spilt a caughtand-bowled.

South Africa's pursuit of 414 at 81, taking a day between his third and fourth wickets, while Johnson was used Lee heavily in gaining 2 for 127 in Siddle 39 overs. The inexperienced on Australia's under-pressure men tried but were ineffective in dealing with a side that is more talented and committed than its hosts.

SCOREBOARD

(overnight 198 for 7)

McKenzie b Siddle

Smith c Haddin b Siddle

Scoreboard at stumps on the third day of the second Test between Australia and South Africa at the Melbourne Cricket Ground on Sunday: AUSTRALIA: First innings 394 SOUTH AFRICA: First innings

Duminy c Siddle b Hauritz 166 Boucher c Hussey b Hauritz 3 Morkel b Johnson Harris c Johnson b Hussey 39 Ntini not out Extras: (b-5, lb-13, nb-15, pen-5) 38 Total: (All out in 153 overs) 459 Fall of wickets: 1-1, 2-39, 3-Siddle finished with 4 for 102, 4-126, 5-132, 6-141, 7-184, 8-251, 9-431, 10-459.

OMRW Bowler 2 68 0 9 81 39 6 127 Johnson 43 13 98 Hauritz 0 26 Clarke 0 22 Hussey 3 14 0 Symonds 11 AUSTRALIA: Second innings Hayden not out

Katichnotout

Extras: (nb-1)

To bat: Ponting, Hussey, Clarke, Symonds, Haddin, Lee, Hauritz, Johnson, Siddle. OMRW Steyn Ntini

Total: (For no loss in 3 overs) 4

1 Region 24 Energy 2 Press 38 Bohemian 3 Approach 25 Ostrich's 26 Wine + Regis horror film Gershwin franchise 40 Hostel 5 Butter 8 Invitation 42 Changes 28 British suffix look-alike 49 Mideast sunset 29 Type of 8 "Auto-13 Antespaniel matic" 30 See 47-Down feature 52 Path left 31 Ironically 9 One 16 Real humorous estate ad 53 Finished

42 Enthusihold expanse 57 Standard members 23 Crow's 58 Take five 19 Exist 43 Stromboli 24 Three Solution time: 25 mins. piece 44 Trade suit 46 Possess feature 47 With 30 27 Rule out vous tyke 33 Kreskin's 48 Fender

56 Indiana

20 Ordeals

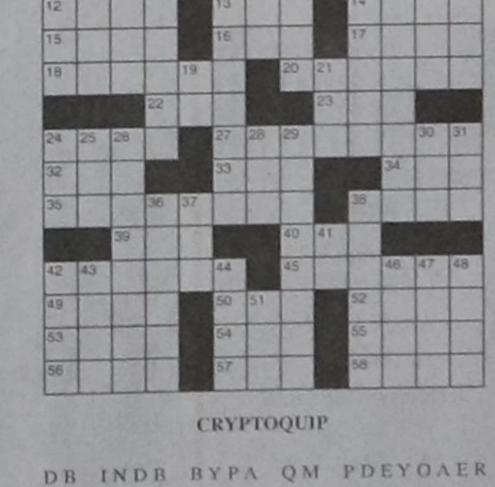
34 One side

of the

Urals

(Abbr.)

22 Vast



JGB GJ IYBN RMPA HEYBYHDV QYXXYHGVBYAR? INAO BNA RNYJR DEA QMIO.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: I BELIEVE ONE SHOULD NEVER HITCHHIKE AFTER DARK, YOU COULD SAY IT'S BEEN MY RULE OF THUMB.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: Q equals D

