

## Dizzy may return early.

By NEIL CROSS. Edited by GEOFF ROACH. Adelaide, The Advertiser. Thursday, November 13, 1997.

AUSTRALIAN Test paceman Jason Gillespie could make a surprise return to the first-class arena before Christmas.

Gillespie's recovery from stress fractures in his back has been faster than expected but there is universal agreement that he will not be rushed into a premature return to the field.

South Australian coach Andrew Sincock, who has overseen the rehabilitation process, said Gillespie appeared to have overcome the technical difficulties which were pinpointed as the cause of his stress fractures.

"I'm reticent to pre( diet an actual time for his SA comeback but it could be before Christmas," Sincock said. "What we will do is wait until he is ready and then wait another week."

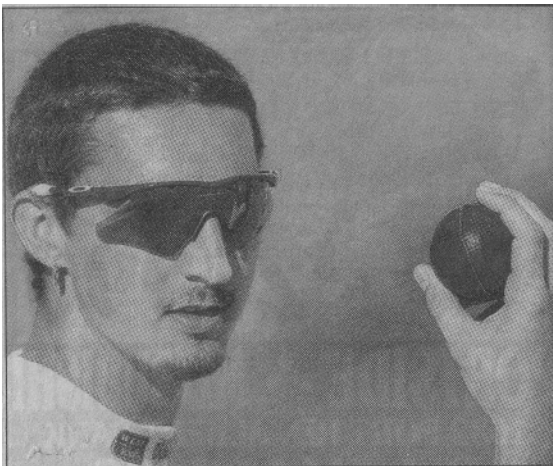
Gillespie has been bowling consistently off 6-7 paces at South Australian training in the past two weeks and in private sessions has even attempted his long run.

Sincock will supervise the paceman during an internal trial match next Wednesday and Thursday. Gillespie is expected to bowl exclusively off the shortened approach for three spells of three overs.

Like his coaches, he does not want to speculate on when he will be ready to again lead an attack.



BACK ON TRACK: Jason Gillespie goes through the motions at Redbacks training at Adelaide Oval yesterday. Picture: RAY TITUS



LOOKING FOR RETURN: Redbacks pacernan Jason Gillespie at Adelaide Oval last night.

"Our intention in this is that he will bowl faster with a better line and more swing control than before and in a way which will reduce the stress on his body," Sincock said.

Gillespie has been working hard on rectifying the problems with his action. Two months ago a group of experts, including Australian coach Geoff Marsh, Australian team physiotherapist Errol Alcott, fast bowling great Dennis Lillee and Sincock set down a program of strengthening and conditioning for Gillespie. It was felt he would take up to six months to return to bowling at first-class level.

But Lillee said yesterday the improvement in his action was "quite phenomenal". "He is looking very, very grooved in getting the action right over six or seven paces," he said.

"There is no pain at all when he bowls which is the first time in many years and proves what he is doing is correct."

"He will be off his long run in the next week or two. As long as he keeps those good lines I see no reason he should not be playing Shield cricket very soon."

South Australia will play three more Sheffield Shield games before Christmas. Gillespie obviously won't start in the match against Western Australia which begins at the Adelaide Oval tomorrow but there is a chance he will be passed fit for the clash with Victoria in Melbourne at the end of the month or the home clash with New South Wales which starts on December 19.

The Redbacks selectors might also be tempted to include Gillespie in the one-day line-up for the December 12 match with Western Australia in Perth.

Lillee said it is important for Gillespie to be satisfied he was ready and not just have a go. "I would hate it if he came back too soon," he said. "I have seen him and I think at this stage, at six or seven paces, he is very much on the right track."

But Lillee cautioned the real test for Gillespie would be his reaction to a long day in the field and being asked to bowl long spells in the heat. "As I have warned him, it's a monitoring process all the way. It took me 18 months to get back in the right groove and even then I was not happy with the first action," Lillee said.

Gillespie has worked diligently with Sincock and educational psychologist Harry Lyndon in a bid to bring forward the date of his return to the bowling crease.

Lyndon, who works in the field of skill correction and accelerated learning, has been working on Gillespie's ability to recognise when he strays from the new action that is required.

"We are trying to modify the old action and create a new way of delivering the ball," Sincock said. "In due course, we will eradicate the old way."

Gillespie has been playing club cricket as a batsman in the lower grades so far this season with frustratingly limited success. It is clear he would like a return to bowling as a means of filling in long days in the field as much as anything else.

## Gillespie nears Test recall with hat-trick

By Andrew Ramsay

AUSTRALIA's rapidly dwindling fast bowling stocks received a timely boost yesterday when injured Test star Jason Gillespie bowled at close to top pace for the first time since injuring his back in England.

Gillespie, who has modified his action after scans revealed stress fractures in his back, took 5-20 including a hat-trick for his grade club Adelaide.

He will now come under close consideration to play in South Australia's Sheffield Shield match against NSW starting in Adelaide on Friday, the next step in his return to the Test arena.

While the national selectors would previously have been reluctant to rush him back for the Boxing Day Test against South Africa, injuries to Glenn McGrath and Paul Reiffel may have altered their thinking.

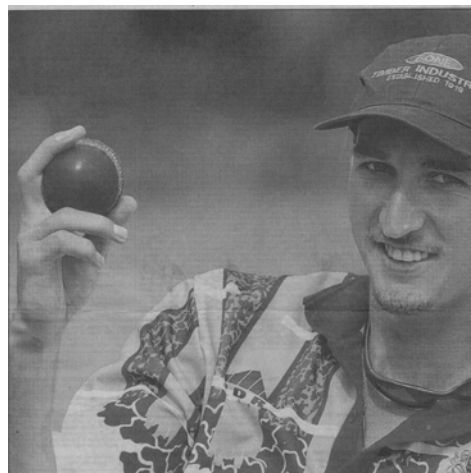
. And a workout against Australian captain Mark Taylor and the Waugh twins may be sufficient to earn him an immediate Test recall.

Having bowled off a shortened run at reduced pace since returning to grade ranks several weeks ago, Gillespie moved up a gear and devastated West Torrens with a 6.4 over spell at Glandore Oval.

All three hat-trick victims came as a result of the frightening pace Gillespie showed during his nine Tests which have yielded him 32 wickets at 22.28.

His first scalp came from a ball which flew from the batsman's glove and was caught by former Sheffield Shield batsman Paul Nobes in the gully.

The next, left-arm spinner Matthew Minagall, could only manage to play a thunderbolt back on to his stumps and the third came via Gillespie's trademark scorching yorker which smashed into middle stump. To complete his day, Gillespie hit the winning runs as Adelaide reached West Torrens' target of 160 with two balls to spare and one wicket in hand.



Howzat ... Jason Gillespie with the ball he used to take five wickets including a hat-trick in Adelaide club cricket. Picture: PHIL HILLYARD.