

Ace batsman sues over Ashes exercises

Court and bowled

SHEFFIELD Shield legend Jamie Siddons is suing Cricket Australia for compensation — because he hurt himself throwing cricket balls.

Siddons claims he seriously injured his right shoulder on the 2005 Ashes tour of England.

The former ace batsman was then Australia's assistant coach, and would spend hours in the nets with the team.

He says his continuing shoulder problems are a result

Norrie Ross

of being required to throw cricket balls on a "constant, repetitive and forceful basis".

In a writ lodged in Victoria's Supreme Court, the former free-scoring batsman for Victoria and South Australia says he's suffered injury, loss and damage.

No figure has been put on the claim, but Supreme Court actions can involve sums of several hundred thousand dollars.

Siddons is now head coach of

the Bangladesh national team, due to play a one-day series in Australia from next month.

He was assistant to Australian coach John Buchanan on the Ashes tour.

"I can verify he threw a lot of cricket balls on the tour," Buchanan told the *Herald Sun* last night.

"We knew he was injured when he returned from the tour. We knew he had an injury sustained from throwing. There's no doubt about that."

Cricket Australia expressed surprise. A spokesman said it

was unaware of the writ.

"We can't talk about Jamie Siddons, but it is common for a batsman to have a member of the coaching staff involved at the training session to stand relatively close and to throw the cricket ball at a pace," said the spokesman.

"It's a throw-down, and is common in club cricket and elite cricket."

The case is due for pre-trial discussions in October.

Siddons, who gives his address as Dhaka, Bangladesh, is suing through a Mildura law

firm. The 44-year-old's solicitor, Shane Ryan, refused to detail the extent of the injury.

"I have no instructions to discuss the case," he said.

Siddons represented Australia only once internationally, making 32 in a one-day match against Pakistan in 1988.

He also played two VFL games for the Swans in 1984.

A cricket insider said Australia was criticised for not training enough on the 2005 tour. "Throwing cricket balls is essentially what a coach does — especially an assistant coach."

