

Mohammed in for Taylor

CRICINFO, undated

Jerome Taylor's fledgling international career continues to be dogged by injury, and on Wednesday it was announced that he was returning home from South Africa, having failed to recover from the back strain he sustained against Zimbabwe almost three weeks ago.

He has been replaced by Dave Mohammed, a left-arm chinaman bowler from Trinidad and Tobago.

Taylor broke down during the first Test at Harare, and managed only 9.4 overs in the match. He has not played since.

Viv Richards, the chairman of the West Indian selectors, explained the selectors' choice by saying: "Judging from the word coming out of South Africa, and having regard for South Africa's vulnerability to wrist-spinners, and having further regard for their recent tour of Pakistan, it was felt among the selectors that a bit of variety would be needed."

Kale to face hearing

REUTERS, Bombay

Abhijit Kale will face an Indian cricket board disciplinary hearing into allegations he tried to bribe his way into the India team, the board's lawyer said on Thursday.

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) lawyer Asif Lamphal told this news agency that investigating officer DV Subba Rao, who questioned Kale last weekend, had reported to the board that there was a prima facie case to answer.

Kale, who has denied any wrongdoing, will now go before the BCCI's disciplinary panel.

The 30-year-old Maharashtra batsman was suspended last month pending the inquiry after selectors Kiran More and Pranab Roy said he had made an attempt to bribe them for a place on the India team.

The allegations have evoked huge interest in the cricket-mad country and sparked a media debate over selection methods.

The BCCI has yet to announce Rao's findings, but Lamphal said a copy of the report had been submitted to the Bombay High Court, which was hearing an appeal from Kale against his suspension.

Rahul urges India

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"I think our guys tried very hard, maybe they could have put the ball in better areas, but it's probably better to give credit to the Australian batsmen. I thought they batted better, rather than us bowling poorly and they put us back foot a little bit."

David said there was no doubt Australia won the opening day of the series, but he urged his teammates to come back on Friday and battle hard to wrest back the initiative.

"There's no doubt Australia won the first day, but we have to come back tomorrow and keep fighting."

"Losing the first day doesn't mean we will lose the series and we are definitely on the back foot, but I think we can come back tomorrow and bowl better and keep fighting."

India have a major mental hurdle to overcome in this series, having last won in Australia in 1981 and having gained a reputation as world cricket's poorest travellers.

Aus prove

FROM PAGE 13

Table with columns: Bowler, O, M, R, W. Rows: Zaheer, Nehra, Agarkar, Harbhajan, Ganguly.

INDIA: Ganguly, Dravid, Chopra, Sehwag, Tendulkar, Laxman, Patel, Zaheer, Harbhajan, Nehra, Agarkar.

IMPRES: Steve Bucknor (West Indies) and Rudi Koertzen (South Africa).

I'm the luckiest bloke'



AFP/REUTERS, Brisbane

Australian first-day centurion Justin Langer sees two sides to being caught off a no-ball early in his innings against India in the opening cricket Test at the Gabba here on Thursday.

The experienced left-hander had a lucky break in the morning session when he pulled left-arm pacer Ashish Nehra straight to Akash Chopra only for West Indian umpire Steve Bucknor to signal a no-ball for over-stepping.

Television replays showed the decision was desperately close to a legal delivery.

"This is the funniest thing about Test cricket ... if he'd have caught that and it had been a no-ball (that hadn't been called) I'd be the unluckiest bloke in the world and now that he catches it I'm the luckiest bloke in the world it's a very fine line," Langer said after play.

Langer rated the hundred among the best of his 16 in Tests because the conditions had been so tough as the ball seamed and bounced on a grassy pitch.

"It's right up there among my best, if not the best, because of how hard I had to work. That's as hard as I've worked for a very long time," Langer said.

"We always aim to win the first session and from there we try to win the first day of the Test series."

"They had very good conditions to bowl at us and we only lost a couple of wickets. It's been a huge day for us."

Langer predicted the tourists would struggle to recover after failing to make the most of favourable conditions.

India won the toss and sent the Australians in on a green wicket that was difficult to bat on, but the hosts survived the initial onslaught to lay the foundations for a massive total.

Langer said Australia captain Steve Waugh told his players he planned to bat first if he won the toss, even though the pitch looked menacing.

"We've learnt our lessons at the Gabba. If you can get through those

first 20 overs or so when it's really tough then you can really set up the game," Langer said.

"It was very hard out there, as hard as I've ever seen it, but it started to play okay as long as you watched the ball carefully."

"The Indian bowlers must have thought it was heaven bowling on that wicket. The ball was flying around everywhere and it was scary just watching it from the non-striker's end."

Langer said the key to

Australia's strong batting display was to play with confidence even when the bowlers were threatening to dismiss them.

"It takes courage to be aggressive but we know it works. We always back ourselves in that situation. We don't hesitate," Langer said.

"We didn't go out there just to score quickly. There were times when it was really hard to score but I guess we're really good at punishing loose balls."



TAKE THAT: Australia opener Justin Langer lofts one for four on way to scoring an unbeaten 115 at the Gabba yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Sri Lanka stick to same squad

AFP, Galle

Sri Lanka have retained their squad for the remaining two Tests of the ongoing Test series against England.

The second Test will be held at the Asgiriya Stadium in Kandy from December 10 to 14 and the third at the Sinhalese Sports Club ground in Colombo from December 18 to 22.

SQUAD

Hashan Tillakaratne (captain), Marvan Atapattu, Sanath Jayasuriya, Kumar Sangakkara, Mahela Jayawardene, Thilan Samaraweera, Kumar Dharmasena, Upul Chandana, Chaminda Vaas, Dinusha Fernando, Muttiah Muralitharan, Dilhara Fernando, Tillakaratne Dilshan, Romesh Kaluwitharana, Michael Vandort.

Graeme again cricketer of the year

AFP, Johannesburg

South Africa named five cricketers for the year Tuesday, with skipper Graeme Smith collecting his second successive award.

The others honoured at a banquet in Johannesburg were Herschelle Gibbs, Makhaya Ntini, Shaun Pollock and Jacques Rudolph, the SAPA news agency reported.

Rudolph was the only first-time winner of the award. Pollock was recognised for the fourth time, while Gibbs and Ntini joined Smith in being honoured for the second time.

Smith became South Africa's youngest Test captain when he was appointed at the age of 22 earlier this year.

He led the country to a Test series win in Bangladesh, then in England the left-handed opening batsman made a South African Test record score of 277 in the first Test in Birmingham and followed that up with 259 in the second Test at Lord's, becoming only the fourth batsman in history to make double centuries in two successive Tests.

Essex sign Kaneria

BBC ONLINE, undated

Essex have completed the signing of Pakistan leg-spinner Danish Kaneria for the 2004 county season.

"We felt that we needed a wrist spinner because here at Chelmsford it is difficult to bowl teams out twice," said coach Graham Gooch.

Kaneria has so far taken 51 wickets in 12 Test appearances, including best figures of 7-77 against Bangladesh.

He will be the third Pakistani to play for Essex following Salim Malik and Mohammad Akram.

He will fill one overseas place, with the other taken by Zimbabwe-born new ball bowler Scott Brant, who is returning for a second season.

Essex were able to move for Kaneria because batsman Andy Flower is now eligible to play under a British passport.

"The Pakistan Cricket Board have now given us permission to sign Danish Kaneria but, as with all overseas players, the PCB have first call on the player should any international cricket be arranged during the English season," chief executive David East told the club's official website.

Henman appoints Annacone as coach

REUTERS, London

Tim Henman has taken on American Paul Annacone as his part-time coach, the British number one said on his website on Wednesday.

Henman has been without a coach since splitting with Larry Stefanki after the U.S. Open in September.

"Paul and I have been friends for a long time and we got to know each other pretty well when he used to work with Pete (Sampras). I obviously have a lot of respect for him for what they both achieved together," said Henman.

In his own playing career, Annacone reached a career-high singles world ranking of 12. He is better known for his relationship with Sampras, who he coached from 1995-2001 when the former world number one, who announced his retirement in August, won eight Grand Slam singles titles.

Akram's denial

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coach the Indian cricket team," he told the judge. "Nor I have been approached by the Indian cricket board." Akram explained that the petition had caused him "mental torture" as well as damaging his reputation.

"If anyone seeks my advice I am duty-bound to help him," Akram continued. "Indian bowlers Ashish Nehra and Zaheer Khan used to call me and take advice, there is nothing wrong with that because when I was young I took advice from Kapil Dev and the late West Indian Malcolm Marshall."

"I am amazed at the narrow-mindedness of the people, they make mountains out of a molehill," he added. "I am going to sue them"

The judge adjourned the current case until December 8.

Akram also faces another appearance in court, again because of a petition filed by a member of the public, following his appearance in a liquor advertisement in India two years ago.

The judge adjourned the current case until December 8.

Kenya not afraid

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Kenya has been invited to tour the Caribbean early next year for a series of build-up matches.

The two-month-long tour, which has been organised by the West Indies Cricket Board starts on January 3.

Murali gives SL edge

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Giles 4-69, Flintoff 3-42) ENGLAND: First innings (overnight 97-2) Trescothick cS'karabM'tharan 23

Vaughan bM'tharan 24 Butcher cS'karab Jayasuriya 51 Thorpe lwbV Vaas 43 C'wood c Jayasuriya bM'tharan 1 Flintoff lwbM'tharan 1 Read c Tillakaratne bM'tharan 0 Batty c Jayasuriya b D'sena 14 Giles c Atapattu bM'tharan 18 Johnson c Atapattu bM'tharan 26 Hoggard not out 6

Extras: (b-12, lb-8, nb-8) 28 Total: (All out in 100.4 overs) 235 Fall of wickets: 1-56, 2-67, 3-142, 4-143, 5-151, 6-155, 7-177, 8-183, 9-208

Table with columns: Bowler, O, M, R, W. Rows: Vaas, Fernando, D'sena.

M'tharan 31.4 15 46 7 Chandana 13 2 24 0 Jayasuriya 17 2 44 1 SRILANKA: Second innings Atapattu st Read b Batty 35 Jayasuriya c Trescothick b Giles 17 Sangakkara run out 19 Jayawardene not out 14 Tillakaratne lwb Batty 1 Samaraweera c Trescothick b Giles 1 Vaas not out 6 Extras: (lb-6) 6 Total: (For 5 wickets in 44.3 overs) 99 Fall of wickets: 1-26, 2-72, 3-72, 4-78, 5-85

Extras: (b-12, lb-8, nb-8) 28 Total: (All out in 100.4 overs) 235 Fall of wickets: 1-56, 2-67, 3-142, 4-143, 5-151, 6-155, 7-177, 8-183, 9-208

Table with columns: Bowler, O, M, R, W. Rows: Vaas, Fernando, D'sena.

WI off to winning start



AFP, Randjesfontein

Daren Ganga made a solid 70 and Brian Lara hit a lightning half-century as the West Indies scored a 12-run win against the Nicky Oppenheimer XI in the opening match of their tour of South Africa Wednesday.

The tourists made 241 for four and restricted the home team to 229 for five in a 45-overs-a-side match played at mining magnate Oppenheimer's private ground midway between Johannesburg and Pretoria.

Ganga, expected to be in the team for the first Test which starts in Johannesburg on Friday week, did not play in the West Indian side during a five-match one-day series in Zimbabwe which ended Sunday. He was promoted to open the batting in his first innings in more than two weeks and hit 10 fours and a six in a 102-ball innings in benign batting conditions.

Shivnarine Chanderpaul was also moved up the order and made 53 off 72 balls in an opening stand of 87 with Ganga. But the fireworks were provided by tour captain Lara, who ceded the captaincy on the day to vice-captain Ramnaresh Sarwan. Batting at number five, Lara smashed an unbeaten 53 off 28 balls with four fours and four sixes.

The Oppenheimer team was

captained by all-rounder Lance Klusener, bidding for a recall to the South African side after being dropped following South Africa's early elimination from the World Cup earlier this year. Klusener, the leading wicket-taker in South Africa's domestic first-class competition this season, bowled just four overs, conceding 18 runs.

Surprisingly, the hard-hitting Klusener did not bat but another left-hander, 18-year-old schoolboy Vaughn van Jaarsveld, gave the Oppenheimer team a glimpse of victory, hitting an unbeaten 49 off 35 balls. Van Jaarsveld hit five sixes, including four off off-spinner Omari Banks.

Although innings were limited to 45 overs, there were no fielding restrictions or limitations on the number of overs sent down by each bowler.

The West Indians start their first-class programme with a four-day match against Free State in Bloemfontein Friday.

SCOREBOARD

Table with columns: Bowler, O, M, R, W. Rows: West Indies, Ganga b De Bruyn, Chanderpaul b Mpitsang, Sarwan run out (Van Jaarsveld), Baugh lwb Kruger, Lara not out, Banks not out.

Extras: (b-1, lb-14) 15 Total: (For 4 wickets in 45 overs) 241 Fall of wickets: 1-87, 2-148, 3-152, 4-201

Did not bat: Hinds, Gayle, Rampaul, Edwards, Collymore

Table with columns: Bowler, O, M, R, W. Rows: Willoughby, Kruger, Morkel, Klusener, Mpitsang, De Bruyn.

NICKY OPPENHEIMER XI

Table with columns: Bowler, O, M, R, W. Rows: Van Wyk c Collymore b Hinds, Bodi c Gayle b Rampaul, Hector st Baugh b Gayle, Prince st Baugh b Banks, De Bruyn c and b Gayle, Van Jaarsveld not out, Morkel not out, Extras: (b-2, lb-8, w-1) 11 Total: (For 5 wickets in 45 overs) 229 Fall of wickets: 1-18, 2-76, 3-117, 4-135, 5-164

Did not bat: Klusener, Kruger, Mpitsang, Willoughby

ATP to protect itself from match-fixing



REUTERS, London

The Association of Tennis Professionals (ATP) plans to build a 'firewall' between itself and the betting industry in a bid to contain the threat of match-rigging and internet gambling.

The governing body of the men's tour intends to pull inside this barrier anyone who gets a tournament credential, whether that person is a player's guest, friend, a medic, a member of the media or even a VIP.

"There are plenty of people who can walk into a players' lounge and see someone throwing up or re-attaching a right leg," an ATP spokesman said on Wednesday. "Information like that can easily be passed on and used."

The ATP is aware that gambling scandals have battered the image of other sports and has been aware for some time of reports of irregular betting patterns in tennis.

Two months ago, the men's game was rocked by allegations of match-fixing and an investigation was immediately launched by the ATP into the state of men's professional tennis.

There were suggestions of insider dealing in information about players' form and fitness and ATP head Mark Miles, at the time, warned of severe penalties for anyone violating rules on gambling.

Bookmakers had suspended betting on a first-round match between Russia's Yevgeny Kafelnikov and Spaniard Fernando Vicente in Lyon in October six hours before it was due to start after receiving bets from "marked accounts".

Although there was no suggestion that either player was involved in wrongdoing, according to the Racing Post a huge worldwide gamble was made on Vicente, who won 6-2-6-3.

The Spaniard had not won since June, losing 11 first-round matches until Lyon. His odds were reduced from 7-2 to odds-on favourite on one of the Internet betting exchanges.

However the ATP, aware that accredited tennis journalists are in a position to provide information for bets, may refuse more applications for credentials in future.

The governing body has also been taking legal advice on the best way to impose rules, which penalise credential holders who are caught passing on information.

The severity of possible punishments could, however, act as a deterrent.

A rule introduced in 2001 empowered the ATP to impose three-year bans and fines of up to \$100,000, plus the amount involved in a wager, on any player whose coach, trainer or family became connected with betting scandals.

Clarke joins Hampshire

AFP, London

Australia's one-day international batsman Michael Clarke will join compatriot Shane Warne at Hampshire next season on a one-year contract.

Clarke will team up with spinner Warne as the second overseas player at the Rose Bowl. The 22-year-old has made a promising start to his career and Hampshire are thrilled to land the starlet.

"We are naturally delighted that Michael has agreed to be our overseas player next season," said Hampshire chairman Rod Bransgrove.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down. Includes a solution key at the bottom.

Cryptoquip puzzle grid with a 10x10 grid of letters and numbers.

CRYPTOQUIP V W Q C I E R P R N M L V P C D P N M X C P, V X M C I K Z L C Y R O X K Q A R O N V Z X L N X Q C I E C P J W C P A N M J D N Q. Yesterday's Cryptoquip: AFTER BEING RIDDEN ALL DAY, THE BICYCLES COULD GO NO FARTHER, THEY WERE TWO TIRED. Today's Cryptoquip Clue: M equals C The Cryptoquip is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.