

Miandad flays Fleemo

Cricket

REUTERS/AFP, Hamilton

Pakistan coach Javed Miandad said he was surprised with the defensive tactics New Zealand captain Stephen Fleming used during the first Test.

"In my opinion, when you are defending 563 you have to attack more," Miandad said after the match ended in a draw. "But he let our batsman settle down and we took the time and got past the follow-on mark of 364.

"I feel the bowlers didn't attack the stumps enough and they bowled a line just waiting for our batsmen to make a mistake and that was to our advantage, because at one stage we were 285 for six. They didn't try to make our batsmen play.

"Had that been my team, I would have said we must attack and make sure the other team didn't make the follow-on."

Moin Khan and Mohammad Sami put on a stand of 152 to take Pakistan beyond the follow-on mark of 364, with Moin scoring his fourth Test century (137) and his first in over seven years, while Sami scored his highest Test score of 25.

Sami also came back strongly in the second innings to take five wickets for 44 in 16 overs after his dismal performance in the first, his figures reading none for 126 off 27 overs.

The Pakistan coach also said, "We could have done better. We didn't push on when we had them 52 for seven. That was the time we should have gone for the kill and we would have won the game."

Fleming said the New Zealand players had discussed how they were going to use the 105 overs originally available to them but with that reduced to 75 overs because of morning drizzle, the equation had changed.

"We knew then that the only team that could win was Pakistan," Fleming said. "And that played on us and there was a definite shift in our minds. We didn't help the situation by playing some poor shots, but you've got to hand it to Sami after the way he bowled in the first innings.

"He had been poor, but he obviously got some confidence the way he batted yesterday and he came back today and showed how good a bowler he was."

Sami said he could not get into rhythm in the first innings. "I was getting no balls all the time and it upset me," he said. "Today it was much better. I was enjoying it much more."

Russel steers SLA again

AFP, Calcutta

Russel Arnold powered Sri Lanka A to a thrilling five-wicket victory over Pakistani A with an unbeaten century in a triangular one-day cricket tournament here on Tuesday.

The Sri Lankan captain hammered an exact 100 off 105 balls with 13 fours to help his team overtake Pakistan's total of 300 with five balls to spare in a tense finish at the Eden Gardens.

Sri Lanka successfully chased the same target against India in the opening match on Monday, with left-handed Arnold (96 not out) playing a big role.

Arnold, who represented the national team in Test matches and one-day internationals, received valuable support from opener Shantha Kalavittigoda who scored 74 off 96 balls with one six and 10 fours.

Pakistan A skipper Shahid Afridi put his team on course for a challenging total with a brisk 47-ball 63 which contained two sixes and eight fours.

Middle-order batsmen Bilal Asad (52 not out) and Faisal Iqbal (50) then built on their captain's knock, but their team still failed to stop Sri Lanka from posting the second successive win.

Left-arm spinner Ranga Herath was the most successful Sri Lankan bowler, finishing with 3-52 off 10 overs.

Pakistan A will meet India A in the next match on Thursday.

BRIEF SCORES

PAKISTAN A: 300 in 49.5 overs (Shahid Afridi 63, Bilal Asad 52 not out, Faisal Iqbal 50, Salman Butt 29, Mohammad Hafeez 28; Ranga Herath 3-52, Nuwan Kulasekara 2-65, Tharanga Lakshitha 2-68)

SRI LANKA A: 304-5 in 49.1 overs (Russel Arnold 100 not out, Shantha Kalavittigoda 74, Jehan Mubarak 42, Naveed Nawaz 24; Shahid Afridi 2-56, Mohammad Hafeez 2-46)

Man-of-the-match: Russel Arnold.

BDR, Narinda big victors

BSS, Dhaka

Title aspirants Bangladesh Rifles registered their second victory in the Orient Bread Cup Handball Tournament as they defeated Surjodoy Boys' Club 34-14 at the Outer Stadium handball ground yesterday.

The winners led the first-half 22-8.

Kamrul and Khairuzzaman, with nine goals each, were the leading BDR marksmen while Sayeedu-zaman being the other notable scorer with seven.

Sunny pulled six back for the vanquished.

Meanwhile, Narinda Progoti Boys' Club crushed Purbachal Parishad 22-1 in the other game.

They lead the first session 10-0.

Div II cricket

BSS, Dhaka

Young Cricketers defeated Prochoy Cricket Club by four wickets in the Acme-Orchy Second Division Cricket League at the City Club ground in Mirpur yesterday.

Young Cricketers scored 142 for six in 42.4 in reply to Prochoy's modest 139 which came from 44.2 overs.



Sri Lanka A's Shantha Kalavittigoda sweeps one for four on way to scoring 74 during their tri-series match against Pakistan A at Calcutta yesterday.

Lesson learnt: Ponting

Cricket

REUTERS/AFP, Melbourne

Australia have learnt their lesson from their shock defeat to India in last week's second Test, vice-captain Ricky Ponting said on Tuesday.

"I think we've learnt from it. We have to be a bit tougher this week," Ponting told reporters at Melbourne airport before leaving for the third Test which starts on Friday.

India lead the four-Test series 1-0.

Ponting made a majestic 242 in Australia's first innings of 556 in the second Test in Adelaide. The dashing right-hander was out for a duck in the second innings with Australia collapsing to 196 all out.

India were set 230 to win after what Australia coach John Buchanan said was an "immature" and "soulless" batting performance by the home side.

India pulled off one of the most remarkable come-from-behind victories in the history of Test cricket.

Rahul Dravid, who made 233 and 72 not out in the match, hit the

winning runs for a four-wicket victory.

India's victory over the world's number one team clinched their first triumph down under for nearly 23 years.

"If we had batted for one more session, things could have been a lot different," said Ponting, who has hit 19 centuries in 73 Tests. "I think you'll see a lot more determined team this week."

Melbourne Cricket Ground's capacity has been reduced to 70,000 as part of renovations for the 2006 Commonwealth Games. However, Ponting said the Melbourne Test had lost none of its excitement.

"This is my favourite cricket ground in the world and Boxing Day (December 26) is traditionally a big Test match," Ponting said.

"It would be nice to have a big game, to carry on from Adelaide."

The captain-in-waiting backed Buchanan's trenchant criticism of the Australian performance.

Buchanan, who publicly caned Australia's second innings batting effort, also privately strongly criticised the team and said deal-making and sponsorships had become a distraction.

In the aftermath, plenty of focus has been placed on a leaked letter

from coach Buchanan to the players.

Ponting said Buchanan's comments would be discussed at a team meeting prior to the third Test.

India will retain the Border-Gavaskar Trophy with a win or a draw in Melbourne, having won the last series in India 2-1 in 2001.

Ponting, who takes over the Australian Test captaincy from Steve Waugh after next month's fourth and final Test in Sydney, was adamant that his players' minds were properly focused on cricket.

"Some of it was right on the mark, there's no doubt about that," Ponting said of Buchanan's comments.

"I agreed with some of it and there is some other stuff that's been going on around the team for a long time."

"We're going to sit down and address a lot of those issues later on today and have a good chat about things."

"Then we'll go about our preparation, try to make us a better team."

Ponting was adamant when asked if the winner of the series would have the No. 1 team tag.

"If we win it, yes if India wins it, no," he said.

Kent confirm Symonds, Sami

BBC ONLINE, undated

Kent have confirmed Australian Andrew Symonds and Pakistan fast bowler Mohammad Sami to their overseas players for the 2004 season.

World Cup all-rounder Symonds returns to Canterbury for a fifth season.

Sami played in three championship matches for Kent last year, gaining a 15-wicket haul in a single match.

"[Sami's] performance at Maidstone last year was an example of the damage he can cause in county cricket," said captain David Fulton.

"Andrew has been a major influence both on and off the field in recent years."

"I know he really wants to challenge for trophies in 2004 and we're all looking forward to welcoming him back."

The county have also released all-rounder Peter Trego from his contract.

Leonine chess

FROM PAGE 13 the winners as prize-money. The champion will collect 1,200 dollars while runners-up can expect 800 dollars.

The players are: Grand Master Alexi Barasav (Uzbekistan), Grand Master Alexander Fomynah (Russia), Grand Master Ziaur Rahman (Bangladesh), Grand Master Niaz Murshed (Bangladesh), International Master Enamul Hussain Rajib (Bangladesh), International Master Reefat-bin-Sattar (Bangladesh), International Master Abdullah Al Raqib (Bangladesh), International Master DK Sharma (India), Manzoor Alam (Bangladesh) and Debashish Mukharjee (India).



GOODBYE BEAUTIFUL GAME: A tearful Chilean football legend Ivan Zamorano bids goodbye to the fans after his farewell match at the National Stadium in Santiago on December 22. A number of world stars including Brazilian superstar Ronaldo appeared in the match.

Three-in-one year Brazil

Football

AFP, Rio de Janeiro

Brazil celebrated its triple crown of world titles as the country's football federation paid tribute to its teams' across-the-board success.

The World Cup trophy, plus those of the under-20 and under-17 world championships, were put on display by the federation in a luxurious, resort hotel in Rio de Janeiro in the presence of the respective captains in Cafu, Adailton and Joao Guilherme.

The world's best team trophy, bestowed on Brazil by football's

world governing body FIFA last week, was also on show.

Cafu, the only player to have appeared in the last three World Cup finals - winning in 1994 and 2002 - said: "We, the players, never had any doubt we could do this. No country has held all three of these titles at once. Only Brazil was able to do it."

Almost the whole of the under-20 squad, which beat Spain 1-0 in the final in Abu Dhabi last Friday, were in attendance.

Striker Fernandinho, who scored the winning goal, said: "I cannot describe the emotion we felt in winning the title. I don't think it has sunk in yet."

Tough drugs ban on Azmy, Walke

AFP, Paris

Egypt's Amir Azmy and Alexander Walke of Germany have received suspensions of 14 and seven months respectively after testing positive for banned substances at the world youth football championships, world football's ruling body FIFA announced Tuesday.

Azmy tested positive for steroid nandrolone while Walke tested positive for THC, the active ingredient in cannabis, at the recent championships in the United Arab Emirates won by Brazil.

Azmy, a defender who plays for the Cairo-based side Zamalek, is suspended from December 9, 2003 until February 8, 2005 and has been fined 15,000 Swiss francs (9,605 euros).

Walke, who is a goalkeeper with Bundesliga side Werder Bremen, will sit out from December 9 until July 8, 2004 and has been fined 10,000 Swiss francs (6,400 euros).

Both bans cover all matches, whether at national or international level, friendly or official, FIFA affirmed in a press release.

The players are allowed to appeal the sanctions but must do so within three days of being officially notified.

Azmy tested positive after Egypt's group match with Japan in Dubai on December 5. Both A and B samples were found to contain the banned substance.

Walke tested positive after Germany's match against the United States on December 2.

Both players declined the invitation to appear before FIFA's disciplinary panel on Monday.

Sao Paulo chase Rivaldo

Football

AFP, Sao Paulo

Brazilian club Sao Paulo have joined the chase to sign World Cup winner Rivaldo who was released by his Italian side AC Milan earlier this month and are prepared to offer him a monthly salary of 80,000 dollars (65,000 euros). Sao Paulo bosses will put their proposal before the 31-year-old midfielder's agent Carlos Arini on Tuesday.

"It's a large sum for a Brazilian club but small compared to European salaries," admitted Sao Paulo president Marcelo Portugal Gouvea.

"Everything is now in the player's hands. We can't do anything more. We would like to sort this out by January 10."

A clutch of clubs are reported to be chasing Rivaldo, but a stumbling block could be his wages. He was reported to be on 215,000 euros (258,000 dollars) a week at Milan.

Rivaldo's agent says they have had three offers from English Premiership clubs and have already turned down an offer of one million dollars a month to play in Qatar. Portuguese giants Benfica are also reported to be interested.

The former FIFA World Player of the Year joined Milan from Barcelona after Brazil's World Cup

triumph in Japan.

But Milan coach Carlo Ancelotti limited him to just 16 Serie A matches, and eight Champions League games last season, when he only made the bench in the Champions League final against



RIVALDO

Inter Milan.

This season has been even worse for Rivaldo, who has made only one substitute appearance in the Champions League, and has not played in Serie A.

But he has kept his place in the Brazil team, playing five internationals for the World Champions, including four World Cup qualifying matches.

Carlos happy at Madrid

AFP, Sao Paulo

Real Madrid's Brazilian international defender Roberto Carlos said Monday that he is ready to extend his deal with the Spanish champions next month.

The 30-year-old Carlos arrived in Real in 1996 and his current deal expires in June 2005, but he said that he wanted to stay in the Spanish capital, and would prolong his contract in January.

"I've had a talk with the president (Florentino Perez) who indicated that he is interested in keeping me and extending my contract by four or five years," Carlos told the local press here.

"I've received some offers, including one from Inter Milan, but I'm happy at Real Madrid and my children have adapted to the country," he added.

Santana's left leg amputated

AFP, Rio de Janeiro

Former Brazil national coach Tele Santana has had part of his left leg amputated following an operation here Monday.

The surgery removed part of Santana's leg from under the knee after he suffered serious circulation problems.

The 72-year-old Santana remains in a serious but stable condition, hospital doctor Jose Olinio Pimenta Figueiredo said.

Santana coached Brazilian club Sao Paulo, and the national side during two World Cups in Spain in 1982 and Mexico four years later.

Adams, Kirsten back in SA fold

REUTERS, Durban

Paul Adams and Gary Kirsten have been recalled to the South Africa squad for the second and third Tests against West Indies.

The second Test starts in Durban on Friday, with the third Test in the four-match series scheduled for Cape Town from January 2. South Africa won the first Test by 189 runs.

Left-arm wrist spinner Adams replaces left-arm finger spinner Robin Peterson, while batsman Kirsten comes in for fast bowler Garnett Kruger.

Adams has played 43 Tests and taken 132 wickets at an average of 31.15 but he has struggled with a hand injury this season.

Kirsten, a stalwart of 95 Tests in which he has scored 6866 runs at an average of 44.87 with 19 centuries, withdrew from the first Test to be with his wife at the birth of the couple's first child.

"Paul Adams is fit again and it was encouraging to see him put in a good performance for the KwaZulu-Natal Invitation XI against SA Schools (in Durban on Sunday)," selection convenor Omar Henry said in a United Cricket Board media release.

Adams took one for 28 from 10 overs in the limited overs match.

The axing of Peterson was expected after the world record 28 runs Brian Lara plundered off one of his overs in the first Test in Johannesburg.

SQUAD

Graeme Smith (captain), Paul Adams, Mark Boucher, Herschelle Gibbs, Andrew Hall, Jacques Kallis, Gary Kirsten, Neil McKenzie, Makhaya Ntini, Andre Nel, Shaun Pollock, Jacques Rudolph, Martin van Jaarsveld.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down. Includes a solution time of 27 mins and a cryptic clue: 'Yesterday's Cryptoquip: I REALLY WANTED MY NEWBORN DAUGHTER TO BECOME A CHEF, SO I NAMED HER SUE FLAY.'

Cryptoquip puzzle grid with letters and numbers. Includes the solution: 'Yesterday's Cryptoquip: I REALLY WANTED MY NEWBORN DAUGHTER TO BECOME A CHEF, SO I NAMED HER SUE FLAY.'

CRYPTOQUIP W L N Q G N I L K M K Y E N I L W D C G C K E B . Y X G A A W E G N T T B H G G P M K P K N T T W D N H M K P G Q G T K I W M . Yesterday's Cryptoquip: I REALLY WANTED MY NEWBORN DAUGHTER TO BECOME A CHEF, SO I NAMED HER SUE FLAY. Today's Cryptoquip Clue: G equals E

NEDVED FACTS

Profile of Pavel Nedved: Factfile of 2003 European Footballer of the Year Pavel Nedved. Includes details on birth date (30/08/1972), birthplace (Skalna), country (Czech Republic), height (1.76m), weight (70kg), position (Midfielder), club (Spkoda Pilsen, Dukla Prague, Sparta Prague, Juventus), international appearances (74), and various trophies won.