

BCCI VP blasts Indian Test side

NEW DELHI, Dec 23: India's cricket team was blasted Tuesday for putting up a pathetic show in the one-day series which they lost 2-5 to a vastly superior South Africa, reports AFP.

KK Mehra, vice-president of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), said the Indian team's performance needed "no comment. It was so pathetic."

"They just went through the mechanical motions of playing," Mehra told the Press Trust of India (PTI) here, saying members of Mohammad Azharuddin's team did not try hard enough to win and showed no heart.

Indian fielders were leaden-footed, lethargic and very slow compared to third electrically-charged rivals on whom he showered praise.

The South Africans were "much superior to our team in all departments of the game," Mehra acknowledged.

The Indians are still to play two five-day Tests on what has been billed the 'Friendship Tour.' Two Tests have been drawn. The South Africans swamped the former world champions 5-2 in the one-dayers.

Former skipper Mansur Ali Khan Pataudi said Azharuddin would certainly lose the captaincy for the England series starting next month if the team performed as badly in the remaining Tests.

Pataudi took the squad to task for showing more interest in making money than playing for the country.

Several members of the team had gone to play "musala matches" in the Gulf, Hong Kong and Canada to earn extra money in the run-up to the South African tour while their rivals prepared seriously, he said on television.

Wadekar retained as Indian manager

NEW DELHI, Dec 23: Ajit Wadekar was retained today as India's cricket manager for an upcoming series against England despite his team's disastrous performance on the current tour of South Africa, reports AFP.

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) met here and decided the former skipper should stay in his post for the home series starting next month, board secretary Chandappa Nagaraj told reporters.



Some look for it while others are looked for seems to be the pith of this photo where Biman Babul is seen receiving the champion's trophy of the first-ever Shaheed Jewel-Mushtaq memorial cricket tournament from Mrs Wajed, mother of Shaheed Jewel, a cricketer who was killed during the Liberation War. — Star photo

Biman lift memorial trophy

Sports Reporter

Bowlers hit back with vengeance to present Bangladesh Biman the first Shaheed Jewel-Mushtaq memorial trophy as Victoria Sporting Club succumbed to a 51-run defeat at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium yesterday.

Needing 252 in 70 overs for a win, Victoria suffered early setbacks with Biman newball bowler Babul dealing two quick blows. Sajid Hassan, moulded by his illustrious father Rouqibul Hassan, the former national captain presently leading Victoria, was bowled by Babul and promising one drop batsman Selim Shahed was adjudged leg before off the same bowler for nought.

Biman's five-man spin attack then had the Victoria batsmen under absolute control, giving very little away but getting important breakthroughs just in time.

Biman skipper Enamul Haque Moni, who flopped with the bat in Biman's unpromising innings of 251 on Tuesday, led the way. The left-arm spinner removed three potentially dangerous batsmen in the Victoria middle order. He accounted for Raja Venkat, the experienced left-handed batsman who top scored with 41 runs.

off 81 balls with four hits to the fence. Rouqibul also fell prey to Moni, caught by substitute Jahangir for a patient 35. Hard-hitting Imran Hamid Partho was Moni's last victim; the dark left-hander holed out to Babul for 12.

Moni got good support from veteran off-spinner Anwarul Amin Azhar. Having been with the airline team since its entry into the big league, this former national spinner claimed three wickets, one of which was of Gautam Some, the all rounder from Calcutta.

Victoria's Iqbal, who has been using the new ball quite impressively for sometime, shone with the bat in the waning Victoria innings. He hit a quickish 31 off 43 balls before the filling of the quota of 70 overs caused indiscretion and a sad end of the batsman.

Wicketkeeper Dalim was the other notable scorer in the 66-over-old Victoria innings. Pushed up the order to open the innings, Dalim scored 29 before Rupam bowled him with his off-spin.

None of the partnerships gelled in the Victoria innings and when national wicket-keeper Debashish Barooah stumped Saikat off Azhar the total had crawled to 199, still 51 runs short of the Biman score.

Azhar had the best bowling

figures, bagging three wickets for 38 runs.

Moni also got three wickets giving away 44 runs.

Paceman Babul, who has joined Biman this year from Young Pegasus, made the early inroads and his final analysis on a bland wicket was quite commendable — two for 21 from 11 overs.

Ahmed Iqbal Bachehu, who held the Biman innings together with a patient 95 Tuesday, was the unsung hero in the Biman bowling attack with the excellent figures of none for 19 from nine overs.

He was quite justifiably named the man-of-the-match for his fine all round show.

Mrs A Wajed, mother of Shaheed Jewel, a martyr of the Liberation War in 1971, gave away the prizes as a special invitee. One of the finest Bangladeshi openers around in the then East Pakistan, Jewel was killed in an operation against the Pak Army on the fateful night of March 25, 1971.

Mushtaq, the other martyr whose memory was honoured by holding this tournament, was one of the dedicated souls of local cricket in the pre-Liberation period. Mushtaq was associated with Azad Boys Club and was killed in the city by the Pakistan Army on the fateful night of March 25, 1971.

Pak batting needs to gear up, says Naushad Ali

WELLINGTON, New Zealand, Dec 23: Pakistan will need to improve their batting if they hope to make a success of their short cricket tour of New Zealand, team manager Naushad Ali said Wednesday, reports AP.

World Cup holder Pakistan arrived in New Zealand fresh from a victory over Australian state team Queensland but after some disappointing performances in the triangular World Series tournament against Australia and the West Indies.

"The bowling is OK, the fielding is fine, but somehow the batting is not clicking. We hope it will come right here," Ali said.

He said he didn't envisage problems for the Pakistan players adapting from the generally faster, bouncier pitches in Australia to New Zealand's slower surfaces.

"Most of the players are professionals. They have been playing in the English county leagues and county championship. They have been here recently in the World Cup. They know the conditions," he said.

"There are one or two players who haven't been here before, but I don't expect there will be any serious problems."

Ali said he expected the series to be evenly balanced.

One-day internationals will be played at Wellington on Dec 26, Napier on Dec 28 and Auckland on Dec 30.

The only Test of the series will be at Hamilton, Jan 2-6.

"Our side is a well-balanced combination of experience and young blood. They are determined to do well," Ali said.

Pakistan will have a net session at the Basin Reserve on Thursday in preparation for the opening one-day match on Saturday.

Pacemen Craig McDermott

SA eye Test series as well



EAST LONDON, South Africa, Dec 23: South Africa, buoyed by their comfortable victory over India in the day/night series, seek to translate that superiority into the five-day game when the third Test begins on Saturday in Port Elizabeth, reports Reuters.

After two drawn matches in Durban and Johannesburg, South Africa believe they can gain their first win in four Tests since returning from isolation and are likely to attack.

Captain Kepler Wessels, player-of-the-series in the limited-overs competition — which South Africa won 5-2 — will move up to opener after the dropping of Jimmy Cook.

To give him a full complement of five bowlers off-spinner Omar Henry can expect a recall.

India, revived at Sachin Tendulkar's return to form with a century against the South African students this week, and at captain Mohammad Azharuddin's heavy scoring in the day/night series, have to decide whether to stick without-of-form Sanjay Manjrekar or to recall Woorkeri Raman.

While Azharuddin and Wessels agreed Tests are very different, the South African captaincy added: "The day/night series hasn't done our confidence any harm and we hope to carry that into the Tests."

The same may apply to Wessels' leadership. He has been criticised for what one Johannesburg newspaper called "dull and unimaginative".

People expect to much to quickly. In Test cricket it takes time to get into the groove."

Transvaal coach Eddie Barlow, a member of the great South African side that thrashed Bill Lawry's 1969/70 Australians 4-0 in the last series before isolation, pointed out that team took several years to mature into the formidable force it became:

Barlow's team beat Australia by 323 runs in the last Test at Port Elizabeth — also the last before isolation — with Barry Richards making a spectacular century.

St George's Park, which also staged South Africa's first Test in 1889, has since been transformed by another of South Africa's impressive new stands.

If the fans are to see South Africa go ahead in the four-Test series they will have to score quicker — and bowl out and India side that, although not batting to potential, has proved very obdurate.

He believes their biggest

weakness is lack of experience. They are a strong side but a young one. While some of the players have been in country cricket (notably Wessels, Peter Kirsten and Allan Donald), and there is a wealth of talent, they need consistency.

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Aussies may opt for pace trio



MELBOURNE, Dec 23: Australia is likely to opt again for three pacemen in the second Test in an effort to skittle out the West Indies, whose fragile batting left tallenders struggling to earn a draw in the first Test, reports Reuters.

Pacemen Craig McDermott and Merv Hughes have again been included in the 12-man squad for the match beginning on Saturday.

Third paceman Mike Whitney comes into the side in place of Bruce Reid, out of the second and third Tests after surgery on an injured shoulder.

McDermott, Hughes and Whitney are likely to play if the heavily sanded wicket in Melbourne, where a 50,000 crowd is expected on the first day, continues to produce uneven bounce.

"I'm a bit loath to go in with only two quicks but we'll have to have a look at the track," said Australian skipper Allan Border, a middle order bat who scored 116 not out for Queensland in a one-day match against Pakistan in Brisbane this week.

Pakistan are here for the one-day series with Australia and West Indies.

"The pitch has been a bit uneven in bounce so I would say the three quicks probably will play," Border told reporters.

The absence of paceman Reid, who took seven wickets for 151 off 53 overs in the first Test, is a blow for Australia.

But in their effort to blow out the injury-plagued West Indies twice, top order batsman Dean Jones, 12th man for the first Test, has been dropped for the second in favour of leg-spinner Shane Warne, a 23-year-old who has played in only four Tests.

Warne and Whitney are the two changes to the Australian side which in Brisbane just failed to secure a win when West Indies held on for 133 for eight in their second innings.

Spinner Greg Matthews, who took two for 59 from 40 overs in Brisbane, is likely to be carrying the drinks in Melbourne, the second of five Tests.

West Indies skipper Richie Richardson, the most informed player in his side will not be naming his squad until the last moment.

"Obviously, we are concerned about our batting. It's a little inconsistent," he said.

The West Indies player most in jeopardy is fast bowler Patrick Patterson, who took only one for 127 in Brisbane. He is likely to be replaced by left-arm spinner Jimmy Adams, who is also a useful batsman if the West Indies are again in trouble.

But veteran opener Desmond Haynes, although suffering from a strained left-knee, is just beginning to show a return to form, hitting 96 in a one-day match against Pakistan last week.

Richardson has back strain, while paceman Ian Bishop sore toe, and Anderson Cummines, left-side muscle strain, are also in discomfort.

Third paceman Kenneth Benjamin has a groin strain.

Australian squad: Allan Border (Captain), Mark Taylor, David Boon, Ian Healy, Merv Hughes, Craig McDermott, Damien Martyn, Greg Matthews, Shane Warne, Mark Waugh, Steve Waugh, Mike Whitney.

Div II cricket from Dec 28

Sports Reporter

The 1992-93 Second Division cricket league will begin from December 28, Monday with Three Star Boys Club taking on Shantinagar 'A' at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium.

Thirty-one teams split into four groups will vie for the top two places in the points table to play in the Milnars First Division league from next year.

Meanwhile, a meeting of the Second Division league committee has been called on December 26, at 6 pm at the BCCB office. Members and club representatives have been requested to attend the meeting.

BCCP names 3 to replace Graveney



KARACHI, Dec 23: Pakistan cricket authorities said here Wednesday they had proposed two Indians and a New Zealander to the International Cricket Council (ICC) to replace Tom Graveney who was axed as a referee for the upcoming tour of the West Indies, reports AFP.

The removal of Graveney is a triumph of the ICC's principles," said Shahid Rafi, secretary of the Board of Control of Cricket in Pakistan (BCCP), adding that "Pakistan would agree to a person who is mutually acceptable to the West Indies for this job."

The BCCP had put forward former Indian cricket captains, Mansoor Ali Khan Pataudi and Sunil Gavaskar together with New Zealand's Frank Camerons as possible replacements for Graveney Rafi said.

The ICC is likely to appoint Graveney's replacement in January.

Pakistan will be touring the West Indies from March 18, May 6, playing three Tests and five one day internationals.

Pakistan had objected to the appointment of the 65-year-old former England batsman as a referee because "He

was not on the approved list of the ICC" and for his alleged "bias" in the recently concluded Pakistan tour of England as well as his comments on the Mike Gatting-Shakoor Rana row five years ago over umpiring.

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