

Repentant Cullinan

REUTERS, Johannesburg

South Africa's Daryl Cullinan has expressed regret over his walkout on the eve of a Test match against Australia in Cape Town in March.

The 35-year-old batsman met the South African cricket board's chief executive Gerald Majola on Thursday in an atmosphere described as cordial.

Cullinan had been recalled to the team for the first time in nearly a year only to quit over a contractual dispute.

He was widely regarded as having ended his international career and suspended by his province, Gauteng, pending an inquiry into his behaviour.

A cricket board news release quoted Cullinan as saying: "Gerald and I had fruitful discussions and there was regret expressed on my part in terms of my withdrawal from the team in Cape Town."

He added: "I would like to play a positive role in South African cricket whether that be as a spectator or as a player."

Majola said: "I accepted Daryl's explanation and am glad we can put our differences aside and keep the game at heart."

Cullinan has played 70 Tests, averaging over 44, but last appeared in April 2001 against the West Indies in Jamaica.

MacGill moving to Nottingham

REUTERS, Nottingham

Australian Test leg-spinner Stuart MacGill is to join English county Nottinghamshire as one of their overseas players.

The 31-year-old New South Wales player will cover for Nicky Boje when the all-rounder is on international duty with South Africa in August and September, said Notts on their official website.

"I see it as an ideal introduction to playing county cricket, and it is hugely exciting to come over for the business end of the season," MacGill told the website.

"I had returned from a tour of South Africa and was just getting used to the idea of a winter of leisure when I got an e-mail from (manager) Clive Rice asking if I would like to join the Notts staff as cover for Nicky. "I absolutely leapt at the opportunity because Trent Bridge is a magnificent ground with a lot of history and tradition. That's what our game is about and to be a part of that is a very exciting prospect," said MacGill.

"I have been checking out where Notts are in the Norwich Union League and County Championship on the internet and have been trying to learn all the players' names and what they do."

"I called everyone in Australia who has played county cricket to ask them about playing in England."

MacGill, who will arrive at Notts at the start of August, made his international debut for Australia in 1997 and has played in 17 Tests, taking 82 wickets at an average of 25.01.

Russia reach WTC final

REUTERS, Duesseldorf

Marat Safin and Yevgeny Kafelnikov powered Russia into the final of the World Team Cup with a crushing 6-1, 6-0 doubles win against Britain's Marat Safin and Miles MacLagan.

The towering Russians swatted aside the British pair in just 51 minutes to put their country at the top of their group and advance to Saturday's final against Argentina.

World number two Safin, who earlier beat Lee 7-5, 7-5 in their singles clash, totally overpowered the British duo and clinched the match with four big serves in the final game.

"Today we played great," Safin said. "I hope we're going to win tomorrow because we've been trying for the last three years to win this tournament."

The 22-year-old, runner-up in Hamburg to Roger Federer last weekend, was treated for back pain during his singles match against Lee, but said he hoped the problem would not hurt his chances at next week's French Open.

"It's nothing special. I expect I'll have pain for the next three or four days and keep doing something to help my back," he said.

"(But) definitely I want a good result (at the French) because I am playing quite well."

Former French Open champion Kafelnikov, however, was less happy with his form after losing to Britain's Tim Henman 6-2, 7-6 in the singles.

"I'm happy that the team is in the final, but so far I'm disappointed with my individual performance," Kafelnikov said.

Fixing goes

FROM PAGE 13
two points adrift of leaders Orient Sporting Club who have won ten out of their 14 outings.

In the other match of the day, Utara Sporting Club registered an identical win over Sadharan Bima Kira Sangsaha.

Opener Nayeem Islam smashed an unbeaten 88 as Utara, chasing a paltry Bima total of 143 in 50 overs, reached home in 26.5 overs with eight wickets in hand.

New face on England team

Cricket

REUTERS, London

England have called up uncapped Glamorgan quick bowler Simon Jones to add the option of raw pace to their attack for the second Test against Sri Lanka starting on Thursday in Birmingham.

Jones, 23, joined an unchanged squad which drew the first Test after fighting back from the follow-on.

Sri Lanka scored 555 in their first innings at Lord's and the England bowling attack looked anaemic on a flat wicket.

Jones, who attended England's National Academy in Australia under Rod Marsh last northern winter, has taken 14 wickets in first class cricket this season, including a career-best 6-45 against Derbyshire.

"Simon is young and raw but he has an outstanding natural asset in his speed. And we feel that we would like to have him at our disposal until we have had a chance to look at the pitch and assess how it will play," chairman of selectors David Graveney said on Saturday.

"The Lord's Test showed that Sri

Lanka have a very talented batting line-up and if we continue to play on bland surfaces that favour the batsmen, we need to have other options available in our bowling attack," Graveney added.

"The two quickest English bowlers in county cricket at present are



SIMON JONES

Simon Jones and Stephen Harmison of Durham. We did not consider Stephen for this Test match due to injury but we feel that this is a good opportunity for Simon Jones."

England's bowlers Andy Caddick, Matthew Hoggard, Dominic Cork and Andrew Flintoff toiled to little avail against the Sri Lankans and captain Nasser Hussain said afterwards the side should not rely on playing to English conditions to get results.

Jones, son of former England and Glamorgan player Jeff, could unsettle Sri Lanka's batsmen with his firepower on a hard track.

But, after recent rain the pitch at Edgbaston is likely to favour seamers and Jones, whose accuracy is less developed than his speed, may well be sent back to his county.

Graveney said selectors had decided to call up 14 players instead of dropping one in case Cork failed to recover in time from a groin injury.

Of the 13 at Lord's, Alex Tudor was 12th man and spinner Ashley Giles went home early.

Graveney said: "Squad

Nasser Hussain (captain), Mark Butcher, Andy Caddick, Dominic Cork, John Crawley, Andrew Flintoff, Ashley Giles, Matthew Hoggard, Simon Jones, Alec Stewart, Graham Thorpe, Marcus Trescothick, Alex Tudor, Michael Vaughan.

Inter-varsity sports

I CORRESPONDENT, Kustia

The Islamic University plays host to the Inter-university volleyball, badminton and table tennis competition from today.

Seven universities will compete in the meet. They are Dhaka University, the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET), Jahangirnagar University, Chittagong University, Rajshahi University and Bangladesh Agricultural University respectively.

State Minister Youth and Cultural Affairs Fazlur Rahman is expected to inaugurate the event which run until June 1.

Caddick taking wickets again

AFP, London

Andy Caddick brushed off an unimpressive performance in England's first Test draw with Sri Lanka and claimed five wickets on his return to County Championship cricket as Somerset took charge against Surrey at The Oval on Friday.

Caddick took five for 66 as the visitors seized the initiative in the battle between the only two unbeaten sides in the First Division.

Ian Ward was the only home batsman to put up much resistance hitting 62 as his side were bowled out for 220 on a rain-curtailed day and Somerset were 10 without loss at the close.

Surrey got off to the worst of starts when England batsman Mark Butcher walked after the third ball of the day and out of favour England hitman Mark Ramprakash to the eighth.

Champions Yorkshire, still looking for their first win of the season, had another difficult day in the field at Headingly against Hampshire as John Crawley's rich vein of form continued.

Crawley, who was recalled to the England side because of his bright start to the season, struck 79 and Will Kendall 67 in a 145-run second-wicket partnership that saw Robin Smith's side get off to a flying start.

Smith himself weighed in with 41 but the day was far from a disaster for Yorkshire as they pegged the score back to 273 for seven at the close.

Matthew Hoggard, another England seamer looking for a lift ahead of next week's Edgbaston Test, claimed three for 61.

Leicestershire captain Vince Wells ended the day unbeaten on 85 as his side posted 257 for seven against Sussex.

Opener Trevor Ward got the innings off to a solid start once the rain relented with 48 before he became one of in-form Robin Martin-Jenkins' four victims.

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