

Arjuna jockeying for position

AFP, Colombo

Former captain Arjuna Ranatunga on Sunday said he was hoping to head the Sri Lankan cricket administration next year.

"I will contest for the post of President of the cricket Board," Ranatunga told local media here. Ranatunga, who led Sri Lanka to an epic triumph in the 1996 World Cup, retired in 2000 after an 18-year international career beginning with Sri Lanka's debut Test in 1982.

After hanging up his bat, Ranatunga ventured into politics and got elected as a legislator on a ticket from the main opposition People's Alliance party last year.

"It is my duty to contribute towards arresting the dropping standard of the game. If this trend continues even Bangladesh will beat us in 3-4 years time," Ranatunga said.

Sri Lankan cricket administration has been plagued by scandal and controversy and the administration has been run by an interim committee since March 2001.

Ranatunga's bid to get elected as the president of the Board of Control Cricket in Sri Lanka (BCCSL) is expected to face a serious challenge from Tilanga Sumathipala, a former incumbent in the post.

If elected, Ranatunga would be the third member of his family to join cricket administration.

His elder brother Dammika, a former Sri Lankan Test player, held the post of BCCSL Chief Executive. Younger brother Prasanna is a former vice-president of the board.

Seniors

FROM PAGE 13

| | | | | |
|--|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| K Mashud st Shamim b Bashir | 4 | | | |
| K Mahmud run out | 63 | | | |
| Rafique c Mahmud b Enamul | 14 | | | |
| Fahim not out | 8 | | | |
| Extras: (b-2, lb-4, nb-2) | 8 | | | |
| Total: (For 8 wkts in 93.2 overs) | 304 | | | |
| Fall of wickets: 1-25, 2-38, 3-44, 4-119, 5-139, 6-258, 7-287, 8-304 | | | | |
| Bowler | O | M | R | W |
| Shafaq | 11 | 1 | 37 | 0 |
| Kafi | 9 | 3 | 36 | 1 |
| Bashar | 25.2 | 4 | 86 | 4 |
| Enamul | 31 | 8 | 76 | 1 |
| Arif | 10 | 0 | 34 | 1 |
| Mahmud | 5 | 1 | 19 | 0 |
| Kamrul | 2 | 0 | 10 | 0 |

Another Bradman

FROM PAGE 13
"It was a great honour and a great privilege to be playing that test match in front of them."

A broad-shouldered batsman, Hayden is one of the fittest players in the world but says it is his newfound self-belief and mental strength that has turned him into a run-making machine.

"If you haven't got a mental game plan in place, you've got nothing no matter how skilled or how well prepared you are," the 31-year-old Hayden said.

"The last 12 months of my career I've taken on a new level of mental preparation. To be able to rest between games has been a huge plus for me."

Proteas pummel

FROM PAGE 13

| | | | | |
|--|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Tillekeratne c Elworthy b Hall | 27 | | | |
| Fernando lbw b Elworthy | 0 | | | |
| Vaas c Kirsten b Ntini | 32 | | | |
| Fernando not out | 4 | | | |
| Muralitharan b Hall | 0 | | | |
| Perera b Hall | 4 | | | |
| Extras: (b-4, lb-7, w-1) | 12 | | | |
| Total: (All out in 41 overs) | 130 | | | |
| Fall of wickets: 1-2, 2-16, 3-21, 4-25, 5-77, 6-81, 7-122, 8-122, 9-122. | | | | |
| Bowler | O | M | R | W |
| Pollock | 8 | 3 | 17 | 2 |
| Ntini | 10 | 4 | 22 | 3 |
| Kallis | 11 | 3 | 40 | 0 |
| Elworthy | 10 | 3 | 39 | 2 |
| Hall | 2 | 1 | 1 | 3 |

Result: South Africa won by innings and 64 runs.
Man-of-the-match: J. Kallis.
Series: South Africa lead the two-Test series 1-0.
Umpires: Daryl Harper (Aus), Russell Tiffin (Zim).

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

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| 13 Historic | 47 Gumbo | 8 Free | inter- |
| periods | ingredient | 9 Hum- | 27 Curved |
| 14 Hurry | 48 Miss | 10 Second- | 28 molding |
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| 18 Actress | D'Urber- | vilias" | 33 Andean |
| Sorvino | 16 "Casa- | blanca" | club |
| 19 Chopin | 50 Adolescent | owner | 34 Earlier |
| piece | 51 Many | 19 Early | time |
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Blignaut leads fightback

Cricket

AFP, Harare

An aggressive innings of 33 by Andy Blignaut and a cautious 34 by Zimbabwe's little wicketkeeper Tatenda Taibu frustrated Pakistan during the afternoon of the second day of the first Test here.

In taking Zimbabwe to 181 for six at tea there is now only a difference of 104 runs with Pakistan's first innings total of 285 overnight with four wickets in hand.

Zimbabwe were struggling on 136-6 when Blignaut came to the wicket and promptly slammed

Pakistan held the upper hand until then and they might have expected to rip Zimbabwe out for well under 200 runs.

But as Akhtar increased the tempo, Taibu grew in stature and Blignaut became more aggressive. Akhtar produced a leg-side ball of 156kph and was growing irritated.

The next session could decide whether this match will be tight or whether Pakistan will gain the ascendancy.

SCOREBOARD
Scoreboard at tea on the second day of the first Test between Zimbabwe and Pakistan at Harare Sports Club on Sunday:

PAKISTAN: First innings 285 (Umar 75, Youhana 63, Blignaut 5-79)

ZIMBABWE: Firstinnings

| | | | | |
|--|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Ebrahim c Inzamam b Sami | 31 | | | |
| Masakadza c Akmal b Sami | 9 | | | |
| Campbell b Akhtar | 2 | | | |
| G. Flower lbw b Waqar | 31 | | | |
| A. Flower c Akmal b Sami | 29 | | | |
| G. Whittall b Akhtar | 7 | | | |
| Taibu not out | 34 | | | |
| Blignaut not out | 33 | | | |
| Extras: (lb-1, nb-3, w-1) | 5 | | | |
| Total: (For 6 wkts) | 181 | | | |
| Fall of wkts: 1-36, 2-41, 3-43, 4-76, 5-3, 6-136 | | | | |
| Bowler | O | M | R | W |
| Waqar | 14 | 3 | 58 | 1 |
| Akhtar | 14 | 1 | 42 | 2 |
| Sami | 13 | 2 | 43 | 3 |
| Saqlain | 12 | 4 | 37 | 0 |

LATEST

Pakistan were 14 for one in their second innings when bad light stopped play in Harare yesterday.

Earlier, Zimbabwe's first innings ended on 225. Wicketkeeper Tatenda Taibu was unbeaten with 51.

The pace pair of Mohammad Sami and Shoaib Akhtar shared seven wickets.

Saqlain Mushtaq over his head first ball for six and then swept him out of the attack with three fours.

It had been so different previously as Zimbabwe struggled for survival.

The Pakistan pace attack of Waqar Younis, Shoaib Akhtar and Mohammad Sami ripped through the top Zimbabwe order, leaving them reeling on 43-3, 76-4 and 93-5. Hamilton Masakadza was caught off his glove by wicketkeeper Kamran Akmal - his first in Tests - off Sami for nine. Dion Ebrahim got out to Sami after establishing himself on 31 and Zimbabwe captain Alistair Campbell was yorked by Akhtar for just two.

Grant Flower was building an innings before giving Sami his third wicket by falling victim to lbw to Waqar when on 31.

Brother Andy was unfortunate to get a dubious umpiring decision and he was given out caught behind off Shoaib for 29.



Pakistan bowler Mohammed Sami (C) rejoices on the second day of the first Test at the Harare Sports Club yesterday.

England surrender

FROM PAGE 13
side out, that cheaply is always pretty special, although we've done it a few times now so maybe that's taken a bit of the gloss off it," Waugh said.

England's hopes of holding out for a draw got to the worst possible start when their star opener Michael Vaughan and Marcus Trescothick were dismissed in the first two overs.

They got rapidly worse when Hussain, John Crawley and Alec Stewart went within eight balls of each other just after the tea break and, with a man down after Simon Jones injured himself fielding on Thursday, the end came all too quickly.

SCOREBOARD

Final scorecard on the fourth day of the first Ashes Test between Australia and England at the Gabba on Sunday:

AUSTRALIA: First innings 492 (M Hayden 197, R Ponting 123, S Warne 57, A Giles 4-101, A Caddick 3-108)

ENGLAND: First innings 325 (M Trescothick 72, J Crawley 69 not out, M Butcher 54, G McGrath 4-87,

| | | | | | |
|--|---|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| J Gillespie 2-51, A Bichel 2-74 | Giles c Gilchrist b McGrath | 4 | | | |
| AUSTRALIA: Second innings (111 for 2 overnight) | Caddick c Lehmann b Warne | 4 | | | |
| Langer c Stewart b Caddick | Hoggard not out | 1 | | | |
| Hayden c and b Giles | Jones did not bat (injured) | | | | |
| Ponting c Trescothick b Caddick | Extras: (lb-1, nb-4) | 5 | | | |
| Martyn c Hussain b Giles | Total: (All out in 28.2 overs) | 79 | | | |
| Gilchrist not out | Fall of wickets: 1-1, 2-3, 3-33, 4-34, 5-35, 6-66, 7-74, 8-74, 9-79 | | | | |
| S Waugh c Trescothick b Caddick | Bowler | O | M | R | W |
| 12 | McGrath | 12 | 3 | 36 | 4 |
| Lehmann not out | Gillespie | 6 | 1 | 13 | 1 |
| Extras: (b-3, lb-5, nb-4) | Warne | 10.2 | 3 | 29 | 3 |
| Total: (For 5 wkts dec in 71 overs) | Result: Australia won by 384 runs. | | | | |
| 296 | Man-of-the-match: Mathew Hayden. | | | | |
| Fall of wickets: 1-30, 2-39, 3-192, 4-213, 5-242 | Australia lead series 1-0. | | | | |
| Bowler | Umpires: Steve Bucknor (WIs) | | | | |
| Caddick | Rudi Koertzen (Rsa) | | | | |
| Hoggard | Second Test: Adelaide (Nov 21-25) | | | | |
| White | | | | | |
| Giles | | | | | |

ENGLAND: Second innings Trescothick c Gilchrist b Gillespie 1 Vaughan lbw b McGrath 0 Butcher c Ponting b Warne 40 Hussain c Ponting b McGrath 11 Crawley run out (Gilchrist) 0 Stewart c Hayden b Warne 0 White c Hayden b McGrath 13

England lead series 1-0.
Umpires: Steve Bucknor (WIs) Rudi Koertzen (Rsa)
Second Test: Adelaide (Nov 21-25)

Flema, Cairns try defuse row

INTERNET, undated

New Zealand's leading players have stepped in to settle the dispute that has threatened India's forthcoming tour, according to newspaper reports.

Captain Stephen Fleming and star all-rounder Chris Cairns have entered negotiations with New Zealand Cricket (NZC) authorities after negotiations through the players union failed, the Sunday Star-Times reported.

Talks between the New Zealand Cricket Players Association (NZCPA) and NZC broke down earlier this week after the players turned down pay increases ranging between 11-18 per cent.

Under the pay schedule suggested by the national body, New Zealand's 20 contracted internationals would earn a retainer of 120,000 New Zealand dollars (38,000 pounds) per year.

First-class players would receive just 38,000 New Zealand dollars (12,000 pounds) for a four-month season.

The NZCPA were demanding a 60 per cent increase, on the basis of a multi-million dollar television rights payout in five years.

But there were widespread claims that the confrontational style of players' boss Rob Nichol had hindered talks.

The breakdown has left competitions already cancelled and first-class sides planning to draft in retired former players and juniors to fill the void.

And there have been reports of intimidation towards potential strike-breakers.

"I had a young guy ring me up the other day in tears," Canterbury wicketkeeper Russell Hock told the New Zealand Herald.

"These guys had been his heroes, but now they were simply bullying and intimidating him, letting him know what would happen if he folded."

Boycott behind the mic soon

INTERNET, London



Geoffrey Boycott

Geoffrey Boycott is hoping to return to his cricket commentating duties as he continues to undergo treatment for cancer.

The 62-year-old former England opening batsman was diagnosed with cancer in September after a lump was found on his neck.

But he told his employers ESPN he is hoping to be back behind the mike soon with a view to commentating as originally planned on the World Cup in southern Africa next spring.

He told the American broadcast company: "I feel very good - no problems swallowing and eating."

"I'm sleeping well, and my weight's great."

Boycott faces a further programme of treatment before Christmas, though.

"I need some more drugs and radiation treatment that will start next week and go on for five weeks," he said.

"I hope I will be ready to resume work for ESPN by the World Cup in February."

Unchanged melody

INTERNET, Johannesburg

When Gary Kirsten made his debut against Australia in 1993 few would have predicted that he would become the first South African to hit 6,000 Test runs.

He lacked the flair of brother Peter or the other new boys on the block Hanse Cronje and Daryll Cullinan.

But he has proved more enduring than any of his contemporaries.

Former greats Barry Richards and Graeme Pollock would surely have reached 6,000 runs much earlier had their Test careers not been stalled by South Africa's exclusion during the apartheid era.

Kirsten has made the most of the opportunities that were denied that duo.

The 34-year-old literally grafted his way to the top, working tirelessly on his game to eliminate faults and make the best of his talents.

He is moulded more in the gritty style of Michael Atherton and Steve Waugh than the elegance of Brian Lara and Sachin Tendulkar.

During his career he has broken several batting records and become the batting rock on which South Africa has come to depend upon.

He has scored more Test centuries (16) than any other South African and shares the highest individual score (275) with Cullinan.

And last month he became the first batsman in the world to have scored centuries against all nine Test sides.

His durability was tested to the full in August when he was dropped from the side for the Champion's Trophy tournament after a poor run of form.

But his undiminished hunger for the game enabled him to bounce back from the setback.

Fellow left-handed opener Graeme Smith is being groomed to succeed the master.

But South Africa would like Kirsten to stand the test of time for a while yet.

Sourav's displeasure

INTERNET, Nagpur

Sourav Ganguly has called on his bowlers to stand up and be counted after India slumped to another one-day loss against West Indies in Nagpur on Saturday.

The visitors lead the seven-match series 2-0 after a Chris Gayle century inspired them to victory with four balls to spare.

And under-pressure skipper Ganguly was quick to lay the blame at the feet of his attack.

"To win, we need to take wickets which we did not do," Ganguly said after watching West Indies lose just three wickets.

"We just did not look a side that is hungry enough in these two games. We need to work on our cricket."

"We did not create much chances to put pressure on them."

After losing the five-Test series 2-0 earlier on the tour, West Indies' fortunes have taken a turn for the better in the limited-overs game.

Elated captain Carl Hooper was happy with his own decision to insert the hosts, despite India setting his side a daunting 280 to win off 47 overs.

Nasser unashamed

Cricket

REUTERS, Brisbane

England captain Nasser Hussain said his team had nothing to be ashamed of after their massive loss to Australia on Sunday.

Hussain blamed his team's 384-run defeat inside four days on nerves but said they had nothing to be embarrassed about because they had tried their best.

"We've had worse Tests than this," Hussain said.

"If any player didn't give it his all then they should be embarrassed for letting their country down."

"But I believe in my players and I believe all 11 of them gave it their best shot."

The Essex batsman, one of just three English players to reach double figures in the side's miserable second innings total of 79, said his players had been unusually nervous before the first day and failed to handle the pressure of taking on the world champions.

"Maybe it was the build-up, maybe it was the stadium, the noise, the importance of the game, I just don't know," Hussain said.

Hussain said his players had shown what they were capable of when they fought their way back into the match on the second day but they would have to learn how to cope with the pressure every day if they wanted to beat the Australians.

"Every Test match is about

handling nerves and pressure," Hussain said.

"We'll be under enormous pressure again in the second test. There's pressure on every day, on every delivery, on every decision you make and it's whoever handles that pressure the best will come out on top."

Hussain confessed that he had made a mistake in letting Australia have first use of a Gabba wicket almost perfect for batting after winning the toss.

But the 34-year-old captain said that had little impact on the result and it was England's failure to stick to their gameplan and get the basics right that ultimately cost them any

chance of victory.

"I'm not a believer in impetus and things like that, it's just about skills and discipline," he said.

"That's why Australia are a good side at the moment, a very good side, a great side, because of their discipline."

"If we batted first we might have posted a different score but still the difference in the sides would have been the disciplines."

"The areas they bowled their balls, the way they caught, the way they went about their batting was a lot better than us."

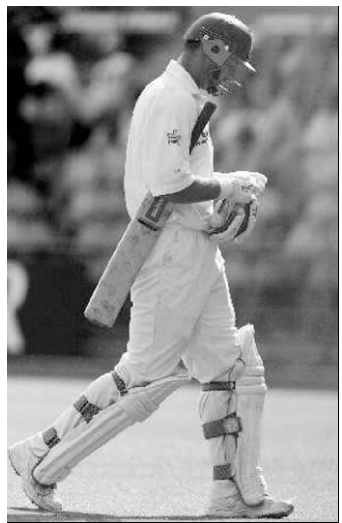
Despite England's poor record against Australia and the magnitude of their first-test loss, Hussain said he was still optimistic his players could win their first Ashes series in 16 years.

"Unfortunately we have a habit, and it's not funny, of losing first test matches," Hussain said.

"(But) if you know anything about English cricket we have lost before and we have lost first tests before and we have turned things around so that's one bit of history that we can call upon."

"I believe in any contest that if you give yourself the best chance to succeed then you've got a chance but if we play like we did on the first day then we've got no chance of beating Australia."

"If we play like we did on the second day when we batted first up then we've got a good chance."



NASSER HUSSAIN

Steve consoles Eng

Cricket

REUTERS, Brisbane

Australia captain Steve Waugh has offered little hope to a shattered England side after his side won the first Test by 384 runs.

"There's no doubt England will find it hard to come back from this, it's a pretty devastating loss," Waugh said after Australia won on the fourth day.

"But that's why you play test cricket, to really see whether you can come back from adversity, and they've certainly found themselves in a tough position now."