



The victorious Sri Lanka A cricket team members pose for photographers after they won the final of the three-nation limited-overs series against India A in Calcutta yesterday.

Lara rules out whitewash

Cricket

AFP, Durban

West Indian captain Brian Lara ruled out a second successive whitewash defeat in South Africa after his team were beaten by an innings and 65 runs on the fourth day of the second Test at Kingsmead Monday.

"There's no chance of a whitewash," said Lara after the match. The master batsman added his team were improving all the time and were looking forward to 2004 as a new start.

They take on South Africa again on the second day of the new year when they play the third Test at Newlands, Cape Town, Friday.

They have lost both matches so far in the four-Test series and lost all five Tests in 1998-99.

Even if the persistent injury problems dogging his side don't clear up, Lara said his team would not suffer the fate of the side he led five years ago.

"It's not going to happen," he insisted.

Lara appeared on the verge of backtracking when he was asked whether the West Indies could win the last two Tests to share the

series. "That's a possibility he said. A whitewash is also a possibility but it's ruling it out."

Lara said he was being realistic in his assessment that his side were improving.

"Our batting is getting better all the time. We've got a bowling problem but that's easier to fix than the batting."

He said the fight shown by the current side was already an improvement on recent performances on away tours to Sri Lanka, Australia and England.

Lara said the toss had played a big role, with his side being bowled out for 264 in overcast conditions after being sent in on a pitch with early life.

The pitch then played easily as South Africa scored 658 for nine under sunny skies.

The West Indies were bowled out for 329 Monday despite centuries by Ramnaresh Sarwan and Shivnarine Chanderpaul.

SCOREBOARD

Final scoreboard on the fourth day of the second cricket Test between South Africa and the West Indies at Kingsmead on Monday:

WEST INDIES: First innings 264 (Lara 72, Drakes 67, Jacobs 58; Ntini 5-66, Nel 3-43)

SOUTH AFRICA: First innings 658-9 declared (Gibbs 142, Kallis 177, Kirsten 137; Sanford 3-170)

WEST INDIES: Second innings (overnight 18-0)

Hinds b Nel 11

Ganga lbw b Pollock 12

Sarwan b Ntini 114

Lara c McKenzie b Hall 11

Baugh c Ntini b Kallis 2

Jacobs c Kirsten b Rudolph 15

Chanderpaul c McKenzie b Ntini 109

Drakes c Rudolph b Nel 4

Dillon c Gibbs b Nel 0

Sanford not out 18

Edwards c Boucher b Ntini 5

Extras: (lb-16, nb-11, w-1) 28

Total: (All out in 113 overs) 329

Fall of wickets: 1-31, 2-32, 3-78, 4-95, 5-130, 6-243, 7-271, 8-271, 9-317

Bowler O M R W

Pollock 22 9 42 1

Ntini 26 8 72 3

Nel 18 3 68 3

Hall 13 3 20 1

Kallis 11 3 20 1

Rudolph 23 3 91 1

Result: South Africa won by an

innings and 65 runs and lead the

4-Test series 2-0.

Man-of-the-match: Jacques

Kallis.

Toss: South Africa.

Umpires: Simon Taufel and

Darrell Hair.

Shakil Rating chess champ

Fide Master Abu Sufian Shakil clinched the Prime Bank Sixth International Rating Chess tournament title with a game to go at the NSC yesterday.

Shakil earned maximum 8 points after the end of the eighth round games. Mehdi Hasan Parag was in the second position with 6.5 points and ASM Nasser held the third place with 6 points.

In this round Shakil beat FM Rezaul Haque, Parag beat Monir Hossain and Nasser beat Alamgir Hossain.

Meanwhile, in the 25th National Women Chess Championship Masuda Begum took the sole lead in the points table with maximum 4 points after the end of the fourth round games of the preliminary phase of 25th National Women Chess Championship at the NSC yesterday.

Four players were in the second position with 3.5 points each. They are: Afroza Khanam Babu, Shamima Sharmi Shimmi, Shamima Sultana Shirin and Mahmuda Haque Chodhury Moly.

Thierry Henry wasn't totally satisfied with the performance.

"We could have done better," said Henry, who set up Pires for the goal.

"Still it is very important to keep the race tight and not lose points now."

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players of running scared and

Tri-series title goes to SL A

AFP, Calcutta

Schoolboy Farveez Maharoof grabbed 4-39 as Sri Lanka A whipped India A by seven wickets in the final of the three-nation limited-overs series here on Tuesday.

In a one-sided match in front of some 10,000 fans at the Eden Gardens, the Sri Lankans shot the hosts out for 197 and then galloped past the modest target with 16.2 overs to spare.

BRIEF SCORES

INDIA A: 197 in 44.4 overs (Sridharan Sriram 65; Farveez Maharoof 4-39, Ranga Herath 2-46)

SRI LANKA A: 198 for 3 in 33.4 overs (Jehan Mubarak 61, Prasanna Jayawardena 54, Russell Arnold 31 not out; Sarandeep Singh 2-61)

Result: Sri Lanka A won by seven wickets to lift the title.

Premiership

Pires the difference

Football

AFP, Southampton

Robert Pires' seventh goal in six meetings with Southampton was enough to see Arsenal maintain their unbeaten record in the Premiership this season as they came out 1-0 winners here on Monday against an understrength home side.

The Frenchman's first-half effort - his seventh of the season in the Premiership and 10th overall - settled a disappointingly one-sided affair where the Saints failed to muster one shot in the second-half and saw Arsenal move to within a point of leaders Manchester United.

Pires has proved to be

Southampton's nemesis in the past three meetings scoring a hat-trick in their last Premiership clash and then the only goal in the FA Cup final last term.

"I like playing this team. I am their bogeyman," grinned Pires.

Arsenal coach Arsene Wenger was content to have maintained the pressure on United.

"It was a well done job," the Frenchman said.

"We didn't win by more because their keeper made some good saves."

Wenger also insisted he would not be flashing the cheque book in the transfer window which opens in January.

"No I'm not not at all going to buy."

"If you look at the players we have out and in the team at the moment I think we have a strong enough squad."

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players of running scared and

warned them they could be harmed by that performance for the rest of their lives.

"It is the first time ever since I have been here that we looked like we were scared of the opposition.

"We should be able to bottle that smell of fear."

"I told the players you must remember that game for the rest of your life and how you embarrassed yourselves in front of a record crowd (32,151)."

"I told them it could be a good game for your career as it will make you buck up or a bad game for your career when that's it for you as a player here and you will make your way down the leagues."

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