

Rudolph rescues SA

Cricket AFP, Cape Town

Jacques Rudolph held the South African innings together after the West Indies made inroads on the home team's in-form batting line-up on the first day of the third Test at Newlands on Friday.

South Africa, who led the four-match series 2-0, were 206 for three at tea after winning the toss with the left-handed Rudolph unbeaten on 57.

Fast bowler Adam Sanford dismissed both opening batsmen, Graeme Smith and Herschelle Gibbs, then held a catch at third man to dismiss Gary Kirsten off the bowling of Fidel Edwards.

South Africa suffered another blow when Jacques Kallis, who made centuries in the first two Tests, had to go to hospital for X-rays after being struck on the right forearm when he missed a pull against Edwards.

A team spokesman said he had severe bruising but would be able to bat later if necessary.

Sanford was the star for the West Indies, taking two for 34 in a 13-over spell which spanned the lunch break.

He broke an opening stand of 70 when Gibbs was caught behind for 33.

This was followed up by having South African captain Smith caught at first slip for 42.

Kallis, who made 158 in his first three innings of the series, looked in excellent form, scoring 20, all in boundaries, off the first 20 balls he faced.

But he looked in serious pain after being struck by Edwards. He carried on batting for a short while but had to retire hurt with his score on 23.

The tourists, already missing three players who had to return

home early because of injuries, suffered two more blows before the match.

Shivnarine Chanderpaul, who made a century in the second innings in Durban while batting

with a runner, was ruled out because of a quadriceps strain and replaced by new cap Dwayne Smith, while seam bowler Corey Collymore, who missed the second Test because of a hamstring injury,

was again ruled out after failing a late fitness test.

Opening batsman Chris Gayle returned after suffering a hamstring injury in the first Test in Durban, with Carlton Baugh being dropped, while left-arm spinner Dave Mohammed was picked ahead of Mervyn Dillon, the most experienced seam bowler in the touring party.

Mohammed made an inauspicious start when he dropped a straightforward chance at gully from Gibbs off Edwards when the batsman was on 22.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at tea on the first day of the third Test between South Africa and the West Indies at Newlands on Friday:

Table with columns: Team, Player, Runs, Wickets. Includes South Africa and West Indies scores.

WEST INDIES: Lara, Gayle, Hinds, Ganga, Sarwan, Smith, Jacobs, Drakes, Mohammed, Sanford, Edwards.

Umpires: Daryl Harper (AUS) and Srinivas Venkataraghavan (IND). Television umpire: Ian Howell (RSA). Match referee: Ranjan Madugalle (SRI).



West Indies bowler Adam Sanford (R) celebrates the wicket of South African captain Graeme Smith at the Newlands Cricket Stadium in Cape Town yesterday.

Kenyans fly to Windies

AFP, Nairobi

The Kenya cricket team left for a tour of the West Indies on Friday, their first overseas tour since the Sharjah Cup in the United Arab Emirates last April.

"It's going to be a great tour for us since we will play in all the Caribbean islands during the eight weeks," said new coach Andy Moles.

The Kenyans will start their campaign in the Carib Beer series (formerly known as Busta Cup), against the West Indies "A" team at St. Kitts, Antigua on January 9.

Their next match will be against the Leeward Islands on January 16 before meeting the Brian Lara-led Trinidad and Tobago a week later.

The team, which includes three junior players, will be without the country's top bowler, Thomas Odoyo, who underwent a knee operation in December.

"I'm sad to have to miss the tour but I have to save my future career," said Odoyo.

"I hope Alfred Luseno (one of the three youngsters) who takes my place in the team will be a good replacement and will learn a lot during the tour."

The other members of the team are skipper Steve Tikolo, Martin Uji (vice-captain), Maurice Odumbe, Ravindu Shah, Kennedy Oduya, Hitesh Modi, Collins Oduya, Peter Onyango, Brijal Patel, Lamech Onyango, Francis Otieno, Maurice Ouma and Rageb Aga.

WHIZZ KID-203 correct answers

- 1. Who clinched the International Cup? Ans: Boca Juniors
2. Who won the 2003 Asian footballer-of-the-year award? Ans: Mahdavi
3. Who is the Pakistan Cricket Board chairman? Ans: Shaharyar Khan
4. Who won the FIFA player-of-the-year award? Ans: Zidane
5. How many runs did Shahriar score against Defence Housing Authority (DHA) in the Patron's Trophy? Ans: 218

Peace beyond

FROM PAGE 13 joined hands to host two World Cup tournaments in 1987 and 1996 and formed a strong united block at the ICC to break the Australia-England-New Zealand nexus.

During the 1996 World Cup when Australia and the West Indies refused to play in Sri Lanka due to security fears, a joint India-Pakistan team travelled to Colombo for a friendly match to show all was well.

Three years later, a packed Chepauk stadium in Madras gave Wasim Akram's men a heart-warming ovation as they ran a lap of honour after defeating India by 12 runs in the first Test of the 1999 series.

"We play the best cricket against each other," Akram said.

"But we should play more against each other so that the tension is less."

If only the politicians and the professional spoilsports can bring themselves to stay away.

9,000-dulkar!

FROM PAGE 13 the most prolific batsman in modern cricket had failed to reach double figures in eight of his last 13 Test innings and ended 2003 with only 153 runs in five Tests at an average of 17.

It had been an underachieving series up to the Sydney innings and he passed his highest score of 44 posted in the second innings of the third Melbourne Test, which India lost by nine wickets last Tuesday.

Tendulkar fended off a challenge by West Indian Brian Lara (8,916) to reach 9,000 with Lara due to lead his team into the third Test against South Africa in Cape Town later Friday.

Australian Allan Border holds the world record for most Test runs with 11,174 in 156 Tests at 50.56.

Steve Waugh, who is playing his 168th and last Test in the Sydney match, is currently on 10,807 runs in second place at 50.98.

Tendulkar now has former record holder and Indian great Sunil Gavaskar in his sights with Gavaskar third all-time with 10,122 runs in 125 Tests at 51.12.

First ODI today

Cricket AFP, Auckland

The cricketing gods have dealt Pakistan all the aces for the one-day series against New Zealand starting here Saturday.

Not only do the tourists bring enterprising top-order batting and a more than useful lower-order into play, they have a bowling attack with strengths across the board.

In the just completed Test series won by Pakistan 1-0, the New Zealand batsmen had no answer to

the problems facing the Black Caps in the five one-day matches: "It's pretty hard trying to hit 150kmh reverse-swinging yorkers all over the park."

Cairns, who is expected to play after being struck by a virus that sidelined him from the second Test, said New Zealand would have to produce a healthy run rate right from the start of the innings before the strike power of Akhtar and Sami return at the death.

"Bowling at the death is one of their strengths," he said.

"As a batsman, you just have to accept that you're unlikely to be as effective as you usually would in the closing stages."



INZAMAMUL HAQ



STEPHEN FLEMING

Inzamamul Haq's Pakistan team may have lost some of their more famous names but the young guns at the top of the order had made a big impression, and have the security of a seasoned middle and lower support group.

In the recent series in Pakistan opens Yasir Hameed and Imran Farhat set a world record with four successive 100-run partnerships and Hameed finished the series with 356 runs while Farhat made

Buchanan remains positive

Cricket AFP, Sydney

Australian coach John Buchanan is hoping for a repeat of the previous Test when India relinquished a strong opening day position after the tourists batted themselves to a healthy 284 for three in the final Test here on Friday.

Sachin Tendulkar was finally in the runs with an unbeaten 73 as the Indians made full use of winning the toss to be in a good position to bat themselves into an unbeatable situation by stumps on Saturday.

But memories are still fresh of India's collapse in the third Melbourne Test when they collapsed from 329 for four after the first day to be all out for 366, losing their last six wickets for 16.

Australians then made India pay by posting a 192-run innings lead to ram home victory and level the series coming into Steve Waugh's 168th and final Test in Sydney.

Buchanan was hinting at another recovery on Saturday's second day as Australia try to prevent the Indians from holding on to the Border Gavaskar Trophy with either a win or a draw in the fourth Test.

"It's a little bit of a carbon-copy of the Boxing Day Test match

where India were four for 320-odd at the end of the first day," he said after Friday's play.

"We offered a few chances we had given their batsmen a few opportunities to capitalise on that and we turned that around the next day and that's what we'll be looking to do tomorrow."

"We need to use the (second) new ball reasonably well tomorrow morning."

Buchanan conceded Australia



JOHN BUCHANAN

were not living up to their usual high catching standards with another catch going down at a crucial time early in the Indian innings on Friday.

348. "We need to take wickets at the top of the order," said Cairns.

"Pakistan's main game-plan revolves around their young batsmen making a good start and getting them through to the 30 and 40-over mark with eight or nine wickets intact."

In one-day matches New Zealand are on a seven-match losing streak while Pakistan showed they remain in top form by beating Wellington in a warm up match this week.

With Akhtar and Sami rested, Abdul Razzaq and Azhar Mahmood showed they were also useful exponents of reverse swing as they sparked a collapse of six for 19 in leading Pakistan to a 35-run victory.

The two took four wickets apiece and with Younis Khan scoring 63 and Salim Elahi 40 while captain Inzamamul Haq and Younis Khan were rested, coach Javed Miandad's only dilemma is which of his form players to omit.

TEAMS

NEW ZEALAND (from): Stephen Fleming (captain), Craig Cumming, Hamish Marshall, Craig McMillan, Scott Styris, Chris Cairns, Brendon McCullum, Jacob Oram, Andre Adams, Daniel Vettori, Kyle Mills, Daryl Tuffey, Ian Butler.

PAKISTAN (from): Taufeeq Umar, Imran Farhat, Saleem Elahi, Yasir Hameed, Yousof Youhana (vice-captain), Inzamamul Haq (captain), Asim Kamal, Younis Khan, Moin Khan (wicketkeeper), Abdul Razzaq, Shoaib Malik, Danish Kaneria, Shoaib Akhtar, Mohammad Sami, Shabbir Ahmed, Umar Gul, Azhar Mahmood.

Peace beyond Al-Shahriar show

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Asia Cup likely

FROM PAGE 13 possibly, three Tests and five to seven one-day internationals.

India last played a Test series in Pakistan in 1989, while Pakistan crossed the borders in 1999 for three Test matches.

Ponting's reward

FROM PAGE 13 The medal was presented to Ponting by the Australian Prime Minister John Howard in the team dressing room after the opening day's play in the fourth Sydney Test on Friday.

The McGilvray Medal honours broadcaster Alan McGilvray, who was the voice of cricket on Australian radio for more than 50 years.

FROM PAGE 13 captured four wickets conceding 17 runs in 4.2 overs.

Chittagong reached the target in 27.3 overs with opening batsman Masum making 33 off 55 balls. He was adjudged man-of-the-match.

Chittagong and Sylhet jointly occupy top spot with six points while Dhaka and Rajshahi share second place having bagged four points each.

National league champions Khulna and Barisal are at the foot of the table on two points respectively.

Today's four-day match between Dhaka and Khulna will now take place tomorrow but the other fixtures go ahead as schedule.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of the three one-day matches of the Ispahani Tea Fifth National Cricket League played at different venues across the country yesterday:

Table with columns: Venue, Team, Player, Runs, Wickets. Includes Dhaka v Khulna, Khulna v Sylhet, Dhaka v Rajshahi.

Table with columns: Player, Runs, Wickets. Includes Sajjad c Hasibul b Razul, Sanwarat Hasibul b Sajjadul, Rafique c Bashir b Sajjadul.

Result: Dhaka won by four wickets. Man-of-the-match: Al-Shahriar (Dhaka)

SYLHET V BARISAL

Venue: Sylhet Stadium. BARISAL: Rashedur b Nayeem, Imran c Nabil b Sami, Jamal lbw b Nabil.

Table with columns: Player, Runs, Wickets. Includes Sajjadul b Masudur, Hasibul c Kadir b Ashrafal, Basharat c Kadir b Rafique.

Result: Dhaka won by four wickets. Man-of-the-match: Masumudowla (Chittagong)

Table with columns: Player, Runs, Wickets. Includes Nasirul c b Litu, Kapali not out, Taqirul not out.

Result: Sylhet won by six wickets. Man-of-the-match: Mustadir Litu (Barisal)

CHITTAGONG V RAJSHAHI

Venue: Cricket Garden, Rangpur. RAJSHAHI: Rafiqul st Asif b Ararat, Tariqul run out, Nuruzzaman b Sabbir.

Table with columns: Player, Runs, Wickets. Includes Masud lbw b Ahsanullah, Anisur b Ahsanullah, Hasanuzzaman c Ararat b Masum.

CROSSWORD

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down words.

Cryptoquip puzzle grid with letters and numbers for solving.

CRYPTOQUIP Y K L R L A U D H O I C K H Q L R D O D N F M O O I Z D I H D Z K Q R L A D C M Y D E E W D I W O U D H D F H N H I L W D R D F C N . Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WHEN EVERYONE IN A ROOM IS COMPLAINING VERY TESTILY, IS THAT WALL-TO-WALL CARPING? Today's Cryptoquip Clue: N equals D

Table with columns: Player, Runs, Wickets. Includes Debrobata, Obaidul, Yasin, Sabbir, Ahsanullah, Masum.

Result: Chittagong won by six wickets. Man-of-the-match: Masumudowla (Chittagong)



President of the Kurmitola Golf Club and Chief of Army Staff Lt Gen Hasan Mashhud Chowdhury (seventh from left) poses with dignitaries after teeing-off the Fu-Wang Cup Golf Tournament yesterday.



PHOTO COURTESY President of the Kurmitola Golf Club and Chief of Army Staff Lt Gen Hasan Mashhud Chowdhury (seventh from left) poses with dignitaries after teeing-off the Fu-Wang Cup Golf Tournament yesterday.

Croft calls it a day

Cricket AFP, London

England off-spinner Robert Croft announced his retirement from international cricket on Friday.

However, the 33-year-old bowler, who played 21 Tests and 55 one-day internationals, will remain in the first-class game as Glamorgan captain.

Croft was called up for the Sri Lanka leg of England's pre-Christmas tour but failed to make it into the Test team.

Left-arm Ashley Giles and experienced Worcestershire off-spinner Gareth Batty claimed the slow-bowling spots in a series England lost 1-0.

"I've come to the conclusion that I will no longer offer myself for selection for any future England Test or one-day side," Croft said.

"In making this decision I was conscious that I've had a challenging and full career with England both at Test and one-day level of which I am extremely proud," he added.

"It's been a great honour and

privilege to represent England as much as I have and I've enjoyed every minute of it.

"I would also like to thank my fellow players for all their help and huge contribution to my career over the years."

Croft, who finished with 49 Test wickets at an average of nearly 38, made his England debut back in 1996 but struggled to nail down a place in the team.

Like several other spinners his England appearances were restricted by the fact that the selectors often opted to do without a specialist slow bowler at all in English conditions.

And when they did former Middlesex left-arm Phil Tufnell and later Giles got the nod amidst a growing belief that conventional off-spinners such as Croft, whose stock ball turns into the right-hander, were becoming ineffective at the highest level.



ROBERT CROFT

Sachin puts India atop

FROM PAGE 13 Melbourne with 25 boundaries and five sixes, looked to be heading in the same direction again before he became Gillespie's first wicket of the innings.

Gillespie broke through 13 overs after lunch when he got one to lift and leave Sehwaig to be snapped up behind by Adam Gilchrist for 72.

Sehwaig, who put on 123 for the first wicket with Chopra, batted for 169 minutes with 10 boundaries and a six.

Chopra had some scares in his innings of 45 before he succumbed to a pearly Brett Lee delivery three overs later.

Chopra lived by his wits early in the first hour with Lee having him caught behind off a no-ball on eight, and then next ball he was dropped by Simon Katich in a straightforward chest-high chance

in the gully. And he was almost run out on 43 the ball after Sehwaig's dismissal when he called through Dravid for a single and Katich narrowly missed the wicket with a diving underhand throw four metres away.

Lee, who conceded a total of 15 no-balls for overstepping, bowled without luck in the morning and finally sent Chopra on his way with a tremendous yorker between bat and pad, leaving the tourists at 128 for two.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard on the first day of the fourth and final Test between Australia and India at the Sydney Cricket Ground on Friday:

Table with columns: Team, Player, Runs, Wickets. Includes India: Chopra b Lee 45, Sehwaig c Gilchrist b Gillespie 72.

Dravid lbw b Gillespie 38. Tendulkar not out 73. Laxman not out 29. Extras: (b-4, lb-2, w-2, nb-19) 27. Total: (For 3 wickets in 90 overs) 284. Fall of wickets: 1-123, 2-128, 3-194.

Table with columns: Player, Runs, Wickets. Includes Bowler: Lee 21 3 80 1, Gillespie 23 7 51 2, Bracken 23 9 60 0, MacGill 18 3 65 0, Waugh 2 0 6 0, Katich 2 0 13 0, Martyn 1 0 3 0.

Toss: India. To bat: Ganguly, Patel, Agarkar, Kumble, Pathan, Kartik.

Umpires: Steve Bucknor (WIS), Brent Bowden (NZL). Match referee: Mike Procter (RSA).