

Pollock misses 2nd ODI too

REUTERS, Durban

All-rounder Shaun Pollock will not return to the South African team for the second one-day international against Zimbabwe in Durban on Sunday, team management said on Saturday.

Pollock, who has a long-term ankle injury, missed the first match of the series in Johannesburg on Friday. Fast bowler Makhaya Ntini will also miss the game after team management decided to rest him.

Fast bowler Charl Langeveldt, who fractured his hand while batting in his Test debut against England in Cape Town in January, was likely to be called in.

"It's an opportunity to give Shaun more time to recover, and to bring back Charl after his injury," South Africa's media manager Gerald de Kock said on Saturday.

De Kock said South Africa would probably rest captain Graeme Smith for the last match of the series in Port Elizabeth on Wednesday.

Sharapova-Molik showdown

AFP, Doha

Fourth-seed Alicia Molik produced an awesome display of power to shock top-seeded Frenchwoman Amelie Mauresmo and set up a dream title clash with Russian Maria Sharapova at the 600,000-dollar WTA Qatar Open on Friday.

The Aussie world number 9 was too good for her world number 2 opponent Mauresmo especially in the second set, completing a 7-6, 6-1 victory after rain stopped play for almost four hours with proceedings tied 3-3 in the first set.

She next meets second seed Sharapova who later defeated Slovak Daniela Hantuchova 6-2, 6-4.

But Molik said she felt pretty confident about her game heading into the Qatar Open final against the reigning Wimbledon champion.

"I always expected myself to make it through the week in Doha and I am not surprised to see myself in the final," said Molik.

PCB to push

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the ICC board that the time has come to introduce neutral umpires in the one-dayers to further raise the standard of umpiring at the international level," Shahyarsaid.

"We feel that the benefits of having neutral umpires for one dayers outweighs its possible negative effects."

Balaji, Nehra

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series against Australia last year.

Kaif, who was then not considered for Test matches against South Africa and Bangladesh, will lead a Board President's team in a three-day game against Pakistan at Dharamsala on March 3.

"Yuvraj's record against Pakistan and his present form in domestic cricket prompted the selectors to pick him ahead of Kaif. However, Kaif is in the running for the remaining two Tests," said Nair.

FIRST TEST SQUAD

Sourav Ganguly (captain), Rahul Dravid, Virender Sehwag, Gautam Gambhir, Sachin Tendulkar, Venkatsai Laxman, Yuvraj Singh, Dinesh Karthik, Zaheer Khan, Irfan Pathan, Ashish Nehra, Laxmipathy Balaji, Anil Kumble, Harbhajan Singh.

BOARD PRESIDENT'S XI: Mohammad Kaif (captain), Dheeraj Yadhav, Satyajit Parab, Shikhar Dhawan, Venugopal Rao, Suresh Raina, Neeraj Patel, Parthiv Patel, Ramesh Pongar, Shib Paul, Rudra Pratap Singh, Gagandeep Singh, Ranadeb Bose, Ram Kumar.

SA too strong for Zim



AFP, Johannesburg

Pitiful Zimbabwe were left in no doubt over how much they need former skipper Heath Streak back in the ranks after crashing to a 165-run defeat to South Africa at the Wanderers here on Friday in the first one-day international.

South Africa piled up 301-7 off their 50 overs before the tourists were shot out for just 136 in the 38th over.

Earlier in the day, Streak said he was ready to return to the national side despite being sacked as skipper in April last year when he objected to certain members of the country's national selection panel.

Fifteen senior players also said they would not play for the national side again unless Heath was reinstated.

Their absence was evident again on Friday when Tatendu Taibu's team were completely outclassed by the South Africans with pace bowler Makyaha Ntini doing the early damage with the wickets of Hamilton Masakadza and Stuart Matsikenyeri as the tourists chased their huge target.

That sent Zimbabwe spiralling to 41-3 and they never recovered despite Taibu hitting his side's top score of 28 before falling to Nicky Boje.

Earlier, Zimbabwe's teenage spinner Prosper Utseya took three wickets but could not stop South Africa topping 300.

Utseya, 19, took three for 40 with his off-spin.

South Africa were struggling to get on top of a spin-based attack before a late surge took them to 301 for seven after they were sent in to bat.

South Africa scored 70 runs off the last five overs, mainly through Mark Boucher, who hit 49 off 29 balls and Albie Morkel, who hit 16 off six balls before being caught on the boundary in the last over.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of the first one-day international between South Africa and Zimbabwe at the Wanderers Stadium on Friday:

SOUTH AFRICA
Smith lbw b Matsikenyeri 50
Bacher c Masakadza b Utseya 56
Rudolph c Matsikenyeri b Utseya 50
Gibbs c Maregwede b Rogers 40
Kemp st Taibu b Utseya 8
Boucher b Chigumbura 49
Prince not out 20
Morkel c Masakadza b Panyangara 16
Boje not out 4
Extras: (lb-2, nb-1, w-5) 8
Total: (For 7 wkts in 50 overs) 301
Fall of wickets: 1-87, 2-128, 3-184, 4-197, 5-223, 6-276, 7-297
Did not bat: Hall, Ntini

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Panyangara	10	1	64	1
Mpofu	6	0	44	0
Chigumbura	8	0	45	1
Matsikenyeri	9	0	62	1
Utseya	10	0	40	3
Williams	3	0	16	0
Rogers	4	0	28	1

ZIMBABWE
Matsikenyeri c Gibbs b Ntini 25
Rogers c Boje b Hall 1
Masakadza c Rudolph b Ntini 10
Maregwede lbw b Morkel 16
Taylor c Smith b Hall 3
Taibu c Smith b Boje 28
Chigumbura c Prince b Morkel 0
Williams run out (Boje) 12
Panyangara b Ntini 9
Utseya b Hall 11
Mpofu not out 1
Extras: (b-2, lb-8, w-10) 20
Total: (All out in 37.2 overs) 136
Fall of wickets: 1-4, 2-36, 3-41, 4-55, 5-75, 6-75, 7-110, 8-113, 9-121

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Hall	7.2	1	29	3
Ntini	10	0	42	3
Morkel	6	1	23	2
Boje	9	1	21	1
Bacher	2	0	6	0
Kemp	3	0	5	0

Result: South Africa won by 165 runs and take 1-0 lead.

Man-of-the-match: Mark Boucher.
Toss: Zimbabwe.
Umpires: D Harper (Australia) and I Howell (South Africa).

Anything can happen

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on the third morning, but hosts Rajshahi still took a 46-run first innings lead.

The visitors' efforts came to an end when Rezaul (25) was caught by Shamimul off Alamgir Kabir while Hasibul remained not out 37.

Buoyed by the important first innings lead, Rajshahi scored 217 for 5 in their second innings to take an overall lead of 263, thanks to half-centuries by Jahurul Islam and Naem Islam.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboards on the third day of the four-day matches of the National Cricket League yesterday:

RAJSHAHI-SYLHET
RAJSHAHI: First innings 299
SYLHET: First innings (overnight 202-9)
Golam Rahman run out

115
Moniruzzaman c Forhad b A l a m g i r 6
S h u v o 37
I m t i a z c J a h u r u l b 4
S h u v o 5
S a d i k u r l b w b A l a m g i r 0
P a r v e z l b w b S h u v o 16
B a b e l c J a h u r u l b S h u v o 0
E z a z b b S h u v o 28
T a p a s h b S h u v o 16
R e z a u l c S a m i m u l b A l a m g i r 25
N a b i l c N u r u z z a m a n b 78

S h u v o 1
H a s i b u l n o t o u t 37
E x t r a s : (l b - 4 , n b - 1) 5
Total: (All out in in 80.4 overs) 253
Fall of wkts: 1-35, 2-41, 3-59, 4-104, 5-104, 6-155, 7-185, 8-190, 9-192, 10-253.
Bowlers
O M R W
Alamgir 22.4 1 0 0
50 3
Forhad 7 1 2 2
0
Sumon 17 5 4 5
0
Shuvo 30 3
112 6
Anisur 4 0 2 0
0
RAJSHAHI: Second innings
J a h u r u l c B a b e l b P a r v e z 78
F o r h a d c R a h m a n b T a p a s h 11
A n i s u r r u n o u t 47
N a e m r u n o u t 50
H a s a n u z z a m a n c a b i l b P a r v e z 2
M a s h u d b a t t i n g 7
N u r z a m m a n b a t t i n g 10
E x t r a s : (b - 3 , n b - 1 , w - 8) 12
Total: (For 5 wkts in 75 overs) 217
Fall of wkts: 1-17, 2-108, 3-188, 4-196, 5-199.

Aussies ensure series

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went down hill again.

Marshall and his twin brother James, making his debut, were both run out from cover by Andrew Symonds. Hamish Marshall top scored for New Zealand with 55 and James made 14.

Cairns tried his best to boost the run rate, but on 12 flayed Lee to a diving Hussey at deep point and it was all over as Lee ended with two for 24 off seven overs.

The fourth match is in Wellington on Tuesday.

SCORECARD

Scoreboard of the third one-day international between New Zealand and Australia at Eden Park on Saturday:

AUSTRALIA
Gilchrist c Astle b Cairns 18
Kathich lbw b Vettori 58
Ponting run out (Papps/McCullum) 11
Martyn lbw b Vettori 1
Symonds c Papps b Mills 21
Clarke not out 71
Hussey not out 65
Extras: (lb-2, w-7, nb-10) 19
Total: (For 5 wkts in 50 overs) 264
Fall of wickets: 1-68, 2-85, 3-90, 4-117, 5-128
Did not bat: Hogg, Lee, Gillespie, Kasprovicz

Cairns 10 1 55 1
Astle 9 0 47 0
Vettori 10 0 30 2
McMillan 10 0 47 0
NEW ZEALAND
Fleming b Lee 1
Astle c Gillespie b Kasprovicz 27
Papps ret'd hurt 3
Marshall run out (Symonds) 55
McMillan c Hussey b Symonds 26
Marshall run out (Symonds) 14
Cairns c Hussey b Lee 12
McCullum c Hussey b Hogg 23
Vettori c Gilchrist b Hogg 0
Mills c Kasprovicz b Hogg 1
Tuffey not out 0
Extras: (lb-8, w-4, nb-4) 16
Total: (For 9 wkts in 41.5 overs) 178
Fall of wickets: 1-7, 2-45, 3-114, 4-135, 5-136, 6-161, 7-162, 8-172, 9-178

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Lee	7	0	24	2
Gillespie	6	0	14	0
Kasprovicz	8	1	28	1
Symonds	10	1	36	1
Hussey	3	0	22	0
Hogg	7.5	0	45	3

Result: Australia won by 87 runs and lead the 5-ODI series 3-0.

Man-of-the-match: Michael Clarke.

Toss: Australia.
Umpires: Aleem Dar (Pakistan) and Doug Cowie (New Zealand).

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Lee	7	0	24	2
Gillespie	6	0	14	0
Kasprovicz	8	1	28	1
Symonds	10	1	36	1
Hussey	3	0	22	0
Hogg	7.5	0	45	3

DHAKA-KHULNA
KHULNA: First innings 307
DHAKA: First innings 153
KHULNA: Second innings (overnight 148-2)
Sadat c Sajjad b Sunny 64
Shafiq c Mehrab b Sunny 19
Monirul lbw b Mahmud 42
Hasan c Sazzad b Mahmud 32
Asadulldin c Sazzad b Mehrab 56
Jamaluddin b Sunny 72
Mashrafe c Sazzad b Morshed 52
Salim c Jahangir b Mehrab 17
Kabir lbw b Mehrab Jr 23
Dollar c Anwar b Mahmud 3
Monjurul not out 26
Extras: (b-6, lb-3) 9
Total: (All out in 127.1 overs) 415
Fall of wkts: 1-75, 2-90, 3-159, 4-160, 5-287, 6-301, 7-347, 8-366, 9-369, 10-415.

Bowlers	O	M	R	W
Mahmud	34	3	136	3
Mahbub	2	2	0	0
Niaz	16	5	43	1
Mehrab Jr	30.1	4	114	1
Sunny	28	10	54	3
Mehrab Sr	12	4	35	2
Anwar	2	0	9	0
Chittur	3	0	15	0

CHIATTAGONG-BARISAL
BARISAL: First innings 238
CHIATTAGONG: First innings (overnight 242-4)
Tamim c Shahin b Sonnet 29
Salahuddin b Sonnet 15
Nazimuddin lbw b Sonnet 0
Ehsanul st Shahin b Mosharrarf 186
Azam c Nadif b Sonnet 0
Sunny c Shahin b Mosharrarf 176
Faisal not out 40
Wayskarani lbw b Mosharrarf 0

The influx of overseas players to the Premier League has drawn in keepers from around the world -- more than half the 20 Premier League teams now feature non-British players between the posts.

Denmark's Peter Schmeichel was the rock on which Manchester United built an empire in the 1990s and Zimbabwean Bruce Grobbelaar's athleticism in goal took Liverpool to title after title in the 1980s.

Nowadays the use of players who are not eligible to play for England often appears more a hindrance than a help.

Liverpool shipped a late goal against Bayer Leverkusen after a mistake by Polish keeper Jerzy Dudek while German Jens Lehmann looked anything but secure in Arsenal's 3-1 defeat by Bayern Munich on Tuesday.

In recent years there has been a clear trend -- foreign goalkeeping imports play well for a season, maybe more, and then lose form. Often they are relegated to second choice, or move clubs, within three or four years.

United have failed to replace Schmeichel adequately since he left in 1999 despite buying a number of overseas players.

Australian Mark Bosnich and Italian Massimo Taibi came and went while Fabien Barthez, a World Cup winner with France, had one great season before increasingly becoming an embarrassment to

Proteas should have 7 black cricketers

REUTERS, Johannesburg

South Africa should have at least seven black players in their squad for the 2007 World Cup, the country's cricket chiefs said on Friday.

"The target of a minimum of seven black players in a squad of 15 was recommended by both the transformation review sub-committee and the management committee," Cricket South Africa chief executive Gerald Majola said.

"The target was based on an increase on the five black players in the squad for the 2003 World Cup.

"We do not believe in tokenism, but in capacity building to ensure that all team members can take on the best the world has to offer," Majola said.

Gary Kirsten, South Africa's most capped Test player, will run a high performance programme to identify potential members of the World Cup team.

Agassi reaches semis

AFP, Dubai

Andre Agassi, close to his 35th birthday, reached his first semifinal for four months here Saturday when he overcame the rising Russian Nikolay Davydenko in two tough sets in the Dubai Open.

Agassi, whose chances of his first title since August have been diminished by rain delays which have forced two semifinalists to play twice in one day, nevertheless looked lively and ambitious as he earned the possibility of meeting world number one Roger Federer.

The American's 6-4, 7-6 win depended heavily on being able to set himself up for the first telling blow in any rally with short backswing, hard-to-read, wonderfully well-controlled ground strokes, keeping his opponent on the move as much as possible.

BCB gets its

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legitimate authority," Sajjadul added.

Isolated from cricket activities for more than two-and-a-half years, the directors are on a collision course with Asghar and his advisors. The directors, who were elected in March 2001 with Saber Hossain Chowdhury at the helm, were thrown into oblivion after the BNP (Bangladesh Nationalist Party) swept to power in October 2001.

"We will request the board president to convene a meeting of the board of directors as soon as possible. Besides, we also want to have a look into the accounts of the BCB and appointments then and now," said Sajjadul.

Asghar, a government nominee for the sport's most lucrative federation, promised to hold elections following the suspension of the board of directors. But his words never reflected his deeds, as he was more than happy to work in an undemocratic atmosphere. He is yet to call an annual general meeting, one of the pre-requisites for holding elections.

Good keepers hard to find



REUTERS, London

This week's Champions League matches highlighted a seemingly perennial problem for top English clubs -- foreign goalkeepers.

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No margin for error

English League Cup final today



REUTERS, London

Chelsea midfielder Frank Lampard hopes a victory over Liverpool in Sunday's League Cup final in Cardiff will mark the beginning of an era of sustained success for the London club.

"It's very important to win trophies. I hope this will be the first of many," said the England midfielder, who has yet to notch up a major title in his career.

The 26-year-old was also quick to dismiss critics who hold that the League Cup is a lesser competition and that Chelsea were able to coast into the final.

"It's not been a weak competition as people like to say," said Lampard, whose side eliminated his former club West Ham United, Newcastle United, Fulham and then Manchester United in a memorable two-legged semifinal.

Mourinho said Chelsea had had a tougher path to the final than Liverpool, who met two Second Division sides as they beat Millwall, Middlesbrough, Tottenham Hotspur and Watford.

He added, however, that on Sunday the two teams would start on equal terms.

"When you look at the Premier League it looks like a big difference, I don't know, 20 points or 25 points but the difference between the teams is not big.

"We are not favourites, in my opinion there are no favourites in finals. They have very good players

and a very good manager.

"They can prepare for the game very well, they gave us two very difficult matches (in the league)."

The rival managers, Mourinho and Rafael Benitez are both looking for a trophy that will seal their first season in the English game and it is the only domestic chance for Liverpool's Spanish boss.

Chelsea were still in line only a week ago for four trophies including the Champions League but defeat at Newcastle in the FA Cup has left them with three.

They hold a nine-point lead in the Premier League, their main goal, with 11 games to go but a second successive loss, 2-1 away to Barcelona in the Champions League on Wednesday, has put another trophy in greater doubt.

Lampard, reacting to questions as to whether doubts might now be getting the better of Chelsea, said that when teams played well and were winning regularly "people are waiting for you to lose one, but that doesn't mean it's all downhill now."

Team captain John Terry echoed that sentiment when he said Sunday gave Chelsea "a chance to shut people up".

"We played two very good teams (Newcastle and Barcelona) and were a bit unlucky," said Terry, who is also looking for his first major trophy. "But we are still very confident."

Meanwhile, Benitez insists all the pressure will be on Chelsea to win at the Millennium Stadium.

The competition provides Liverpool's most realistic chance of winning a trophy in Benitez's first

season in charge, but the Spaniard believes the weight of expectation will be far greater on Chelsea manager Jose Mourinho.

"We know Chelsea are favourites. They are top of the table," Benitez told a news conference at Anfield on Friday.

"They are favourites because they have spent a lot of money and have probably the best squad in England. They need to win so they have the pressure. If they lose another game they will be afraid."

Chelsea are nine points clear at the top of the Premier League but went out of the FA Cup at Newcastle last Sunday and trail Barcelona 2-1 after the first leg of their Champions League meeting on Wednesday night.

"They have lost two games so maybe it's the best moment (to play them)," Benitez said.

"All teams have problems. I think Barcelona and Newcastle found something and we will try and look for some weaknesses."

Liverpool have struggled for consistency in the league but were lifted by a 3-1 Champions League win over Bayer Leverkusen in mid-week and have an impressive recent record at the Millennium Stadium.

Two of their record seven League Cup triumphs have come at the Cardiff venue, while they have also won an FA Cup and Charity Shield there.

England international Steven Gerrard will return to captain the side with Fernando Morientes set to lead the attack as Benitez aims to make his first major mark at Anfield.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 Recruits' repast
5 Drill insert
8 Com-petent
12 Touch
13 Camel
14 Cat call
15 Moving man?
16 Miller
17 Differently
18 Deep blue
20 Pealed
22 Preen-lous official
26 They ain't worth a nickel
29 DHL rival
30 Santa --, Calif.
31 Piccadilly statue
32 Actress Irving
33 Mine entrance
34 Flightless bird
35 Clothing protector
36 Helps hoods

DOWN
1 Amah's night visitors
3 Proof of member-ship, maybe
4 Big con
5 Blueprint addition
6 Margarine
9 Met
10 Born
11 Yuletide
12 Change for a C-notch
13 Pilch
15 Farmer's home?
17 Lonely Boys
18 Lambs' dam
19 Solution time: 25 mins.

Black, in verse
40 Semester
41 Proof of restitution
4 Bill
5 Murray movie
5 Strips in the kitchen?
6 Seeking, in the
7 Counsel-ing
8 Make a correc-tions
9 Capital of Serbia
10
11 Amah's night visitors
12 Lonely Boys
13 Lambs' dam
14 Solution time: 25 mins.

21 Petrol
21 Respond (Abbr.)
23 Type of shrimp