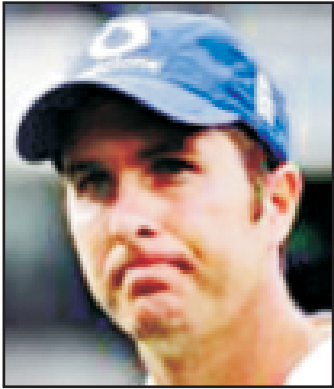




Did U Know?

Wasim Jaffer of India scored 116 runs in the first innings of the third and final Test against South Africa at Newlands on January 2. It was his third century, first against South Africa.



Michael Vaughan

(England cricketer)
"I feel ready. Mentally I am very fresh, which is important at our level. I believe I am a better person and I hope I will be a better player."
After he was named in the one-day squad.



ESPN

India Premier Hockey League
 Orissa Steelers v Chandigarh Dynamos
Live at 5:00 pm
 Sher-e-Jalandhar v Maratha Warriors
Live at 7:30 pm
Primera Liga
 Zaragoza v Sevilla
Live at 2:55 am (Sunday)
STAR Sports
South Africa v India
 Third Test, Day 5
Live at 2:00 pm

Sachin barred from batting at number 4

AFP, Cape Town

Star Indian batsman Sachin Tendulkar was prevented by match officials from batting in his usual position on the fourth day of the third and final Test against South Africa at Newlands Friday because he had been off the field at the end of South Africa's first innings.

There was a six-minute delay between the fall of India's second wicket and the arrival on the field of Sourav Ganguly.

As the delay lengthened there were boos from the crowd, while the South African players asked umpires Daryl Harper and Asad Rauf about the "timed out" rule whereby a batsman can be given out if he is not ready to face within three minutes of the previous wicket falling.

Cricket South Africa media officer Gordon Templeton said the explanation from match referee Roshan Mahanama of Sri Lanka was that Tendulkar had been ready to bat at his usual position of number four.

But because he had been off the field for 18 minutes at the end of the South African innings the previous day he was not permitted to bat until the same amount of time had elapsed at the start of India's innings.

With India losing their first two wickets within 12 minutes of the start of play Tendulkar could not bat.

"The match officials worked out that Sachin could only come out to bat at 10.48am," said Templeton. "The fourth official (South African umpire Murray Brown) only made it to the Indian dressing room the ball before (second man out) Wasim Jaffer was out."

With Tendulkar not permitted to bat, Ganguly had to get ready instead.

"According to the rules, Sourav Ganguly could have been timed out but because of special circumstances in that the fourth official got to the dressing room late he was not timed out," said Templeton.

Spotlight on Mashud

Selectors look beyond Zimbabwe tour



SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh cricket squad that will tour Zimbabwe to play four one-day internationals next month would virtually be the team for the World Cup to be held in West Indies in March-April.

So it would be more than just the selection for a single tour when Faruque Ahmed-led national selection panel sits to pick the side for Zimbabwe and the focus definitely would be on long-standing wicketkeeper Khaled Mashud, who has been almost an automatic choice over the last decade.

It had been evident that the selectors were confused about Mashud's services as they kept the veteran stumper in the squad for the last two games against Zimbabwe in the five-match series but sidelined him. After spending time inside the dressing room, he was then dropped for the two-match series against Scotland although the selectors labelled it as rest.

Undoubtedly, Mashud is still unparalleled behind the stumps but the long-serving cricketer's batting has become a headache for the team management, especially after the just concluded Twenty20 Premier League, where he was rather off-colour.

The wicketkeeper holds a very important batting position in modern day cricket besides a specialised job and with Bangladesh transforming into a team that go for win rather than playing for 'face-saving', it would be necessary to put the right man at the right place.

The selectors have never cleared their positions about Mashud and there is hardly anybody to replace him. Chief selector Faruque says he is impressed by Mushfiqur Rahim -- the selectors' blue-eyed boy -- but the young wicketkeeper, by no means an exciting batsman, has so far not proved his worth with the gloves.

Faruque, however, was not interested to comment on this issue as he said that it was 'too early' to say anything.

"There is hardly any chance to see major changes in the team. But I think it is too early to say about any particular player. We will meet on Tuesday to discuss the squad for Zimbabwe," said Faruque.

"We should make a team for Zimbabwe tour which will likely be the World Cup team because reality is that the players will get only a week after returning from the trip," he said adding that they would announce the 15-member squad by the third week of this month.

"I won't say Mushfiq did a tremendous job in his few appearances but I must say he showed

signs that he has the ability to keep his place in the national side," observed Faruque.

So it is easily understandable that the coming Premier League matches would be a big challenge for Mashud, well-known for hard-work and dedication.

Although Faruque denied to comment on the Mashud issue, it was learnt that the board has been in favour of the Rajshahi stumper for his vast experience. The board high-ups are also not ready to take risk on the World Cup and the have sent the message home in a bid to avoid controversy.

The other major issue besides Mashud to be discussed during the selection meeting is whether they would pick a genuine seamer in place of all-rounder Forhad Reza.

Forhad, another Rajshahi man, glowed in his brief career but it seems that the right-arm paceman and a useful late-order batsman can only be effective on a favourable pitch.

"No doubt Forhad has done well so far and once again I can say it is too early to comment on any particular player. But it is true that we are thinking about including a genuine third seamer considering the conditions in the Caribbean," informed Faruque.

It seems that up and coming medium pacer Dollar Mahmud has a bright chance to get a national call.

India lose their grip



AFP, Cape Town

India lost four wickets for 31 runs as their grip on the third and final Test against South Africa was loosened on the fourth day at Newlands Friday.

India were 121 for six at tea, an overall lead of 162.

Rahul Dravid and Sourav Ganguly put on 84 for the third wicket in a stand which seemed to be taking India a long way towards battling South Africa out of the match and ensuring at least a share of the series, which is tied at 1-1.

But then Ganguly (46) steered a catch to gully off Jacques Kallis and India's scoring rate dropped dramatically as left-arm spinner Paul Harris and seamer Shaun Pollock bowled tightly in tandem.

Dravid reached 47 before going down the wicket to Harris. He failed to get fully to the pitch of the ball and pushed back a simple catch.

VVS Laxman was needlessly run out when he was too casual in taking a second run. Pollock rifled in a return from the midwicket boundary and wicketkeeper Mark Boucher broke the wicket with Laxman's bat on the line, no more than a centimetre from safety. He was given out by television umpire Marais Erasmus.

Sachin Tendulkar, who was prevented from batting in his normal position earlier because he had been off the field too long at the end of South Africa's first innings, struggled for 88 minutes and 62 balls in scoring 14 before he was out in the last over before tea, adjudged lbw to a ball that reverse-swung sharply back into his pads.

It completed a poor afternoon for India, who scored only 48 runs for the loss of four wickets between lunch and tea.

India, starting their second innings with a lead of 41 runs, lost both opening batsmen in the first 14 balls of the day and then were told Tendulkar could not bat at number four after being off the field for 18 minutes at the end of South Africa's first innings Thursday.

There was a six-minute delay before Ganguly appeared on the field and he was almost out first ball

when he edged Makhaya Ntini between third slip and gully.

But captain Dravid and former skipper Ganguly batted solidly to add 84 in 131 minutes.

India restored the hard-hitting Virender Sehwag to his opening batsman role in a sign that the tourists intended to bat positively in

an effort to win the match and series. But Sehwag slashed wildly at Dale Steyn in the second over to be caught behind for four.

Three balls later, first innings century-maker Wasim Jaffer tried to avoid a bouncer from Ntini and

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PHOTO: AFP

India batsman Sourav Ganguly defends a delivery from South Africa pace-man Dale Steyn on the fourth day of the final Test at Newlands in Cape Town on Friday.

I'm satisfied: Ponting



AFP, Sydney

Ricky Ponting admits he shed a tear as the realisation dawned that three of his long-term teammates -- Shane Warne, Glenn McGrath and Justin Langer -- had played their last Test match for Australia.

The Australian captain said his abiding emotion was satisfaction rather than revenge, as his crack side demolished the tourists by 10 wickets before lunch on the fourth day of the final Ashes Test.

It was Australia's first Ashes clean sweep over England since Warwick Armstrong's team's achievement in 1921.

The retirements of the trio of Test greats dominated the final Sydney Test of the series, with

Ponting revealing that he urged the team to do their absolute best to send them out as winners.

"It's not so much the end result of the 5-0 series, but probably just the occasion with the three guys finishing up," said Ponting, who was named player-of-the-series.

"I admit I shed a tear out on the ground, and even when we took the last wicket, to think that this would be the last time that we would be walking off the ground with Glenn and Shane.

"I was hoping to get a chance to bat with Langer, I was a bit dirty on Matty Hayden not getting out," he said with a smile.

"To realise that was the last opportunity that I was going to have was a pretty emotional time."

Ponting was decried as the Australian captain who lost the Ashes after England's 2005 triumph, and he

has been driving the Australian team throughout this series.

He scored 576 runs in the series at 82.29 with centuries in the opening two Tests.

"I'm very satisfied. Revenge has never come into it. I've never mentioned it once. I couldn't be any more satisfied than I am at the moment," he said.

"For us to play as well as we have in the last two games for the guys who are retiring is something they can be proud of.

"I addressed the team before the Test and said all I wanted was when all of us walked off at the end that we could look the retiring players in the eye and knew we'd done our absolute best for them.

"The 5-0 result is pretty fitting that this group of players achieved that."

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3 more booters for Olympic squad

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Olympic football team's technical adviser Abu Yusuf has included three more footballers to the squad yesterday.

Yusuf added fullback Arup, midfielder Ridon and defender Ramjan to the 30-member side that will resume training today under coach Saiful Bari Titu after the Eid vacation.

Bangladesh will face Hong Kong in the pre-qualifiers of the under-23 competition, at home on February 7 and in Hong Kong a week later.

The squad will be reduced to 25 within the next five days and all the members will receive the facilities of the national team players including Tk 10,000 as monthly salary.

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Kabaddi team final for WC

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Kabaddi Federation (BKF) has finalised the national squad for the second Kabaddi World Cup to be held in India later this month.

India also hosted the first World Cup in New Delhi in 2004 but the event has been switched to Maharashtra where at least 20 teams will participate in the four-day meet starting on January 24. Bangladesh, who were eliminated by Iran from the semifinals three years ago, will leave Dhaka with a 14-member squad including four officials on January 22.

Although the federation received the fund to buy synthetic

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PHOTO: AFP

ALL IN A FRAME: Retiring Australian cricketers Shane Warne (L), Glenn McGrath and Justin Langer (R) celebrate after completing a 5-0 clean sweep of England after their 10-wicket win in the final Test at the Sydney Cricket Ground on Friday.

England Aussie-washed



AFP, Sydney

Australia hammered England by 10 wickets in the final Test to complete a 5-0 Ashes series clean sweep for the first time in 86 years at the Sydney Cricket Ground on Friday.

The Australians were left with the comfortable task of scoring just 46 runs to wrap up victory after they dismissed the beleaguered tourists for just 147 little more than an hour into the fourth day.

Justin Langer and Matthew Hayden, playing in their last Test together as Australia's most prolific-scoring opening pair, reached the target just before lunch to wrap up a conclusive victory in a one-sided series.

Langer, playing in his 105th and final Test, was not out 20, with Hayden on 23.

It was the perfect send-off for Australia's three retiring cricket greats, Glenn McGrath, Shane Warne and Langer.

McGrath claimed three fourth-day wickets to finish with 3-38 and took a wicket off his last ball in Test cricket, while Warne left with the distinction of topscoring in Australia's first innings with 71, to go with his two wickets in the match.

All three, who played a combined 374 Tests, received rapturous applause from the capacity SCG crowd to signal the end of a golden era for Australian cricket.

Martyn snub 'just a myth'

CRICINFO, undated

A close friend of Damien Martyn has strenuously denied that he retired from cricket after a bust-up with teammates in the aftermath of the second Test at Adelaide.

Martyn retired from all cricket shortly after the match and left the country almost straight away, avoiding all media contact. But Alan Jones, the Sydney radio broadcaster and former Australia rugby union coach, said stories of rows with Matthew Hayden and Justin Langer were "utter, utter fabrication".

"Justin would confirm that, Matthew would confirm that. Where that has come from is anybody's guess."

Stories have circulated in recent days that one player told Martyn he should quit if he couldn't cope with the pressure.

"He believed he indicated clearly to the Australian selectors why he was leaving the game," Jones said.

"It was in the best interests of cricket, in the best interests of the

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Warne finished his incomparable 145-Test career with 708 wickets, the most in Test cricket, and McGrath ended his 124 Tests with 563 wickets, the most by a fast bowler.

They clocked up 1,001 wickets between them in the 104 Tests they played together.

"To win 5-0 is a fantastic achievement by this group of guys. This team's played some sensational cricket through the whole summer," Warne said.

"England have played some good cricket at times too, but when the big moments have come the Australian team's stood up."

Captain Ricky Ponting was thrilled to send the three legends out as winners but admitted he was emotional.

"It's not so much the end result of the 5-0 series win, probably just the occasion with the three guys finishing up. I admit I shed a tear out on the ground," he said.

"For me to look over the last six-seven weeks, it's probably one of the best little periods of my cricketing life."

Any remote hopes England had of setting Australia a teasing target in the final Test fell away after a cataclysmic start to the fourth day.

The team's remaining batting hope, Kevin Pietersen, was out to the third ball of the day when he was caught behind off McGrath on his overnight score of 29.

And nightwatchman Monty Panesar was run out four overs later after attempting England's first run of the day. It was all downhill

from there.

"We came up against a side that's been fantastic throughout," England captain Andrew Flintoff said.

"Australia hit us hard in the first game and in patches we've competed with them and played some good cricket but every time we've tried to put our foot in the door it's been closed in front of us."

"They've raised the bar in this series. They've been awesome all-round. The batting, the bowlers have bowled as a unit, they've made it really tough for us."

Ponting put Australia's overwhelming series performance into context when he said: "If England are the No.2 side it shows how far ahead we are of the rest of the pack."

"For a team that, when they landed here, lots of so-called experts tipped them to win the series, and for us to whitewash, it just goes to show just how well we played."

It was Australia's 12th consecutive Test win and their 16th from the last 17 Test matches.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard on the fourth day of the fifth and final Ashes Test between Australia and England at the Sydney Cricket Ground on Friday:
ENGLAND: First innings 291 (Flintoff 89, Bell 71; Clark 3-62, McGrath 3-67, Lee 3-75)
AUSTRALIA: First innings 393 (Warne 71, Gilchrist 62; Anderson 3-98)

ENGLAND: England innings (114 for 5 overnight)

Strauss lbw b Clark	24			
Cook c Gilchrist b Lee	4			
Bell c Gilchrist b Lee	28			
Pietersen c Gilchrist b McGrath	29			
Collingwood c Hayden b Clark	17			
Flintoff st Gilchrist b Warne	7			
Panesar run out (Symonds)	0			
Read c Ponting b Lee	4			
Mahmood b McGrath	4			
Harmison not out	16			
Anderson c Hussey b McGrath	5			
Extras: (b-2, lb-3, w-1, nb-3)	9			
Total: (All out in 58 overs)	147			
Fall of wickets: 1-5, 2-55, 3-64, 4-98, 5-113, 6-114, 7-114, 8-122, 9-123, 10-147.				
Bowler	O	M	R	W
Lee	14	5	39	3
McGrath	21	11	38	3
Clark	12	4	29	2
Warne	6	1	23	1
Symonds	5	2	13	0

AUSTRALIA: Second innings
 Langer not out 20
 Hayden not out 23
 Extras: (lb-3) 4
 Total: (For no wkt in 10.5 overs) 36

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Anderson	4	0	12	0
Harmison	5	1	13	0
Mahmood	1.5	0	18	0
Result: Australia won by 10 wickets and clinched the series 5-0.				
Man-of-the-match: Stuart Clark				
Man-of-the-series: Ricky Ponting				
Toss: England				
Umpires: Aleem Dar (PAK) Billy Bowden (NZL)				
Match referee: Ranjan Madugalle (SRI)				

Langer's amazing end



AFP, Sydney

Australian opener Justin Langer said a tearful farewell to Test cricket Friday after a seesawing career in which he was repeatedly dropped by selectors then earned redemption to retire on his own terms.

The 36-year-old scored 7,696 runs in 105 Tests at an average of 45.27 runs, giving him the 20th highest Test aggregate in Test cricket and the sixth highest for an Australian.

The statistics show Langer scored more Test runs than legends such as Colin Cowdrey, Gordon Greenidge, Mark Taylor and Clive Lloyd, yet he often struggled to retain a spot in the Australian team.

It was frustrating for Langer, whose devotion to his baggy green cap was so great that teammate Glenn McGrath remarked Friday that the batsman would have to find something else to wear to bed in his retirement.

Langer perceived to overcome the early perceptions about his batting and was named Wisden Cricketer of the Year in 2001.

Langer has formed part of Australia's most prolific opening partnership with Matthew Hayden, combining for 5,654 runs at an average of more than 51.

Only the West Indian duo of Greenidge and Desmond Haynes have made more runs (6,482) than Langer and Hayden, but they played together for 13 years while the Australian duo joined forces only in 2001.

In early 2006, Langer was almost forced into premature retirement from cricket when he was hit by a Makhaya Ntini bouncer in Johannesburg and was taken to hospital with concussion. Doctors told him another blow to the head could be fatal.

But he was determined to reclaim the Ashes urn that Australia handed to England in 2005, saying "we're the team that lost the Ashes and we're going to make sure we're the team that gets them back".

He achieved the goal in emphatic

fashion Friday, when he and opening partner Matthew Hayden easily reached the total Australia needed to complete a series whitewash against their old foe.

"It was an amazing moment in my life," Langer said. "That's probably the perfect script, to be there when the winning runs are scored with my opening partner, 5-0 up in a Test series."

After the match, Langer stood with his head in his hands crying as the Sydney Cricket Ground applauded him and fellow Test retirees Shane Warne and Glenn McGrath.

He admitted emotions had been raging during his final match.

"There's no denying when the national anthem was on and I saw my family up in the box and looked around for the last time before we went out to field, I knew that I was pretty upset," he said.

"It probably affected the way I played the first day. I dropped three catches. That's good. I'd be upset if I wasn't a bit upset about it."