

Utseya pays for slow over-rate

AFP, Dubai

Zimbabwe captain Prosper Utseya has been fined 40 per cent of his match fee for a slow over rate in the fourth one-day international against Bangladesh in Harare, the International Cricket Council said on Sunday.

Other members of Zimbabwe's team were fined 20 per cent of their fee from Saturday's match following the hearing conducted by match referee Cyril Mitchell.

"This was Prosper's first offence of this nature but he must be careful not to let it happen again. He has received a stern warning," said Mitchell in an ICC statement.

"Slow over rates are not fair to the opposition or the spectators and captains have a responsibility to ensure their players adhere to the regulations in that regard."

Cruciani coming

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London. Now he will arrive on Wednesday," team manager Satyajit Das Rupu told the Daily Star yesterday.

The Dhanmondi-based club has decided to give Cruciani the job with a hope to make history by clinching the first title of the competition, named B. League, as he has a very good understanding with most of the players because they trained under him in the national team.

Dilemma

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There was good news though and the most inspiring outcome of the series might be the efforts of young wicketkeeper Mushfiqur Rahim who justified the team decision of promoting him to the top order by making solid scores of 42 and 57 in the last two games.

His success has also put the selectors in a dilemma and the big question is whether they will rely only on the young stumper or go for both him and long-serving Khaled Mashud to avoid controversy.

Faruque denied any comment on the issue but said that they have to extensively discuss with the team physio before deciding on a course of action for seaming all-rounder Mohammad Sharif.

Peng, Marina

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third set tiebreak to bag the crown. Also, in an incident worth remembering, the final was interrupted in the second set by a swarm of honeybees who had suddenly drifted in from a nearby orchard. The players and umpires all ran for cover but order was restored soon and the play resumed soon after.

The other silverware on offer also went to an all-Indian pairing as the boys' pairing of Sitaram & Vah brushed aside another all-Indian team of Iyer & Marquis 6-3, 6-1.

Anwarul Iqbal, advisor to Caretaker Government distributed prizes amongst the winners after the day's play. Also present were founder chairman of sponsors Dhaka Bank Abdul Hai Sarker and President of Bangladesh Tennis Federation AMM Nasiruddin.

100 boys and 84 girls from 23 nationalities took part in the eight-day competition of the Dhaka circuit.

Nightmare

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Athletic last month.

Last March, Mendes scored two superb goals to give Pompey a 2-1 win over City that sparked a revival and helped the south-coast club escape relegation trouble.

Babayaro shows

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It puts things in perspective.

"Football is the most important thing in your life except for your family. Without your family there is no football.

"We have won and got three points, so Celestine feels very happy and very sad at the same time."

Babayaro travelled to London after the match to be with his family, but will link up with United for Thursday's UEFA Cup tie against Zulte in Belgium.

Becks back

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Madrid barely threatened in the opening half hour but got a break when Emerson was fouled and Beckham, who last appeared for the club as a substitute in the 2-0 defeat by Deportivo Coruna on January 7, drove in the 37th-minute free-kick.

Van Nistelrooy put Real ahead early in the second half but the visitors then had to weather a storm of attacks, with Prieto going close and Casillas making a superb reflex save soon after.

Violence

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policemen specially deployed for the game, throwing stones and pieces of concrete. The game had been interrupted twice because of trouble in the stands.



PHOTO: AFP

GET OFF MY BACK! Mike White attempts a ride during the PBR Amp'd Mobile Invitational in the Professional Bull Riders Built Ford Tough Series at the Honda Center in Anaheim, California on Saturday.

Afridi not appealing



AFP, Cape Town

Pakistan all-rounder Shahid Afridi has decided not to appeal against a four-match one-day international ban handed down Saturday for pushing his bat at a spectator.

Pakistan coach Bob Woolmer said the player had decided not to exercise his option of lodging a written appeal within 24 hours.

An unsuccessful appeal would have delayed Afridi's ban and he might have missed Pakistan's first four World Cup matches in the West Indies next month.

Instead, he will miss the last two matches of the series against South Africa, as well as Pakistan's

first two World Cup matches, against the West Indies and Ireland.

Match referee Chris Broad banned Afridi after a hearing in Cape Town into the incident in which Afridi pushed his bat at a spectator after being dismissed during the first one-day international against South Africa at Centurion last Sunday.

Broad found Afridi guilty of a Level Three offence for "conduct unbecoming, which could bring (players or officials) or the game of cricket into disrepute."

The charge was laid by International Cricket Council chief executive Malcolm Speed.

The incident happened while Afridi was walking up stairs towards the dressing room. Broad found it

was an extenuating circumstance that the spectator had shouted at Afridi.

"I also spoke to the spectator in question ahead of the hearing to get his version of events. However, I found it impossible to escape the conclusion that Mr Afridi's actions were a clear threat to that spectator, and had that person not taken evasive action then the bat would almost certainly have hit him."

Broad criticised the proximity of players to spectators at the staircase.

"I do not believe spectators should be that close to the players or that they should feel they can shout whatever they like and think that is acceptable," he said.

Broad said he had conveyed his view Cricket South Africa.

Lanka win a thriller

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innings in a 108-run stand for the fifth wicket with Tillakaratne Dilshan (56).

He reached his century in style, swinging veteran leg-spinner Kumble for his third six. His 127-ball knock contained four sixes and 11 fours.

The 29-year-old Sangakkara offered a difficult chance on 91, when Patel dropped a return catch but the Sri Lankan smashed the next ball for four.

Patel eventually finished with 4-49, his best in one-day international.

The left-handed Sangakkara received support from Dilshan, who batted sensibly for his eighth half-century before being bowled by off-spinner Harbhajan Singh.

But there was no stopping Sangakkara, who continued to dominate the Indian attack with a wide range of shots. He put on 61 for the seventh wicket with Maharoof to help his team pass the 250-mark.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of the second one-day international between India and Sri

Lanka in Rajkot on Sunday:

SRI LANKA

Tharanga c Tendulkar b Sreesanth	11
Jayasuriya c Dhoni b Patel	9
Atapattu lbw b Patel	15
Sangakkara c Sehwa g b Patel	110
Jayawardene c Dhoni b Sreesanth	4
Dilshan b Harbhajan	56
Arnold lbw b Tendulkar	7
Maharoof c Karthik b Patel	17
Bandara not out	3
Kulasekara not out	4
Extras: (lb-14, nb-3, w-4)	21
Total: (For 8 wkts in 50 overs)	257
Fall of wickets: 1-16, 2-31, 3-53, 4-58, 5-166, 6-188, 7-249, 8-249	

Did not bat: Malinga

Bowler

	O	M	R	W
Patel	9	0	49	4
Sreesanth	10	1	39	2
Ganguly	2	0	14	0
Harbhajan	10	0	41	1
Kumble	10	1	59	0
Tendulkar	9	0	41	1

INDIA

Uthappa c Jayawardene b Maharoof	7
Ganguly c Sangakkara b Malinga	62
David b Maharoof	5
Tendulkar st Sangakkara b Bandara	54
Sehwag c Sangakkara b Bandara	19
Dhoni c Maharoof b Jayasuriya	48

Karthik lbw b Malinga	31
Harbhajan c Jayawardene b Maharoof	2
Kumble run out	2
Sreesanth not out	0
Patel not out	0
Extras: (b-1, lb-5, nb-7, w-9)	22
Total: (For 9 wkts 50 overs)	252
Fall of wickets: 1-14, 2-29, 3-129, 4-154, 5-169, 6-235, 7-241, 8-248, 9-252	

Bowler

	O	M	R	W
Malinga	10	0	75	2
Maharoof	10	0	42	3
Kulasekara	10	0	48	0
Bandara	10	0	36	2
Jayasuriya	9	0	38	1
Dilshan	1	0	7	0

Result: Sri Lanka win by five runs and take 1-0 lead in the 4-ODI series.

Man-of-the-match: Kumar Sangakkara.

Toss: India.

Umpires: Simon Taufel and Suresh Shastri.

Third ODI: Goa, Feb 14.

MU keep Chelsea chasing

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keep winning and the more we win the more pressure we try to put on Manchester United.

"They're having a great season, but if they make any mistakes -- we'll be there."

With 60 points, Chelsea now have a useful lead over Liverpool, who are stuck on 50 after letting slip an early lead at St James' Park from their former Newcastle forward Craig Bellamy, who was booted on his return.

Nigerian striker Obafemi Martins equalised after a goalkeeping blunder by Liverpool's Jose Reina and Peruvian midfielder Nolberto Solano converted a penalty to win it.

Liverpool manager Rafael Benitez told their Web site: "In the

first half we should have been three or four nil up but we then conceded a stupid goal and a stupid penalty.

"It's difficult to explain how we got nothing from this match." Fourth-placed Arsenal, who play Wigan Athletic on Sunday and have a further game in hand, have 46 points.

Down at the other end of the table, Watford remain bottom after Darius Henderson secured their first away league win of the season with a 12th minute penalty.

But it did move them on to 18 points -- just two behind Charlton and West Ham and seven adrift of Wigan.

There was an eventful evening match at Portsmouth where the home side beat Manchester City 2-1

to end a six-match league run without a victory.

Portuguese midfielder Pedro Mendes, knocked unconscious when Portsmouth played City in August, again left the field on a stretcher after Joey Barton clipped his Achilles heel to earn a yellow card.

Portsmouth manager Harry Redknapp was ordered out of the dugout for protesting about the foul.

Mendes had given Pompey the lead with a superb strike after five minutes. Bernardo Corradi equalised for City before substitute Nwankwo Kanu grabbed the winner nine minutes from time.

Something is better than nothing

BBC ONLINE, undated

Andrew Flintoff said a one-day series win over Australia helped a little to make up for England's Ashes whitewash.

"I'm pleased to be taking silverware home. There's a lot of emotion now -- I want to get home and see my family.

"Obviously it doesn't cover the disappointment of the Ashes but we can't look at that now -- we're playing one-day cricket," he said.

"I'm sure that will be addressed after the world cup before we play Test cricket again."

England went more than two months on tour without beating Australia, before securing three successive one-day victories.

Flintoff put the dramatic about-turn down to an increasing maturity, determination and the contribution of Paul Collingwood, who followed back-to-back centuries with 70 in Sydney.

"There was a real determination in the side to put in a good performance and I think we thoroughly deserved to win on the day," he said.

Shoaib doubtful

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Akhtar was banned for two years and Asif for one year on doping charges in November but a month later their bans were controversially overturned on appeal.

The World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) has filed an appeal against the overturning of the ban in the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) in Switzerland, which is not expected to hear the case until April this year.

San Siro given

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doors.

Fans of Inter Milan are threatening to defy the ban on supporters and travel to their match against Chievo, but only to make a peaceful protest.

A message posted on an Inter fans' website said: "With our presence in Verona, we want to show our contempt for the new legislation on banning fans, not to cause problems for the police."

Second division matches resumed on Saturday with only five of the 11 matches open to the public, but all of them passed off peacefully with no reports of trouble.

Security was tight at Vicenza for their home match against Serie B leaders Juventus and ticket sales to away fans were limited.

About 100 ticketless hard-core Juventus fans, or 'ultras', turned up at Vicenza's Romeo Menti stadium, but they were denied entry and closely watched by police.

Tickets for all matches this weekend have the name of the purchaser on them, and ticket holders have to prove their identity before they can enter a stadium.

In another measure to clamp-down on hooliganism, fans are being searched by police to ensure no flares, fireworks or offensive banners are brought in.

Failure no option

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Wednesday.

Yet McClaren remains optimistic the return of key men from injury can transform England's fortunes in Tel Aviv.

And the prospect of not making it to Switzerland and Austria in 16 months time is something he simply refuses to dwell on.

He said: "It has not even entered my head. Of course I am concerned about Wednesday's result, any manager is concerned when they lose a match.

"But we just have to get our belief back, show a bit of character and the English mentality to claw our way out, as we always do when our backs are against the wall and we are not performing so well."

Gerrard impressed

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for the club," he said in the Sunday Mirror. "They said they are going to turn Liverpool into the biggest club in the world.

"They spoke to us about the new stadium and about some of their plans to invest in the team, but what impressed me most was the assurance that they have come to win things.

"I think people have been a bit disrespectful to Liverpool over the last few years, but I can tell you that is going to change now that the takeover has been completed."

Lifelong supporter Gerrard says it "kills" him to see Manchester United and Chelsea dominating English football but he sees a new golden era for Liverpool around the corner.

He said: "I believe that we are still the best club in the land and, with a bit of help from our new owners, there will come a time again when everyone outside Liverpool understands that as well."

'WC is ready'



AFP, Port of Spain

World Cup organisers on Saturday shrugged off increasing worries over stadium delays and rocketing hotel prices despite cricket's global show-piece getting underway in four weeks' time.

Trinidad's famous Queen's Park Oval is still not finished, practice pitches in Jamaica have yet to be completed while a hotel in Guyana, which is due to host many VIPs during the March 10-April 28 event, is also still being built.

Officials too have had to counter growing accusations over profiteering by hotels where some prices have been hiked up to twice, sometimes, three times the normal rate.

Of particular concern is the state of the 20,000-capacity Queen's Park Oval here on the island home of Windies skipper Brian Lara, which will host Group B matches in the first stage where India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Bermuda will play.

International Cricket Council (ICC) World Cup venue development director Don Lockerbie said this week work still needed to be done to two stands -- the member's pavilion and the Trini Posse stand, famous for its vibrant fans and its ceaseless stream

of music during play.

"With about a month to go the Queen's Park Oval has the most work to do of any of the other venues in the region," said Lockerbie.

"We have to run right through to the finish line to get the job done now."

"We wanted to come to the Queen's Park Oval and give the thumbs up and say we're ready to go, but we have got the Trini Posse, arguably the most famous facility of the World Cup...and you tell me," added Lockerbie as he surveyed the shell of the stand.

Lockerbie said it was obvious that the construction time of the venue, which was impeded by labour shortages late last year, "was taking longer than it should."

"My friends in the Caribbean like to tell me that the Caribbean is a place where you always finish in the last minute. Well I'd like to record that we're in the last minute right now."

However, World Cup managing director Chris Dehring and ICC chief executive Malcolm Speed said the tournaments is on track.

Dehring acknowledged it was a "little disappointing" that there were venues that were still behind schedule.

"There are 30 days to go and we are ready to go," Dehring was quoted as saying in the Trinidad Express.

"We will be ready to go. Mr Lockerbie's statements were a warn-

ing to everybody that now is not the time to ease up and that we have to finish strong and right through to the finish line. Having said that, I'm pleased with where we are."

Speed said he was encouraged by the progress being made.

"There is still work to be done and not much time to do it," he said.

"But that is usually the case with big events like this. I'm satisfied that most of those matters under our control have been dealt with and are being dealt with."

"So far as is possible, the matters that arise and that are under our control will be dealt with. But I have also said that don't be surprised if there are issues like any other world event."

Meanwhile, a report in Jamaica's Gleaner newspaper claimed that visitors to the island for the World Cup face having to pay inflated prices for hotel rooms, with many being almost double the standard rate.

A survey by the newspaper revealed variations in price of between 63 percent and 133 percent above the normal rate.

One hotel, it claimed, has rates of 300 dollars a night, compared to the 167 dollars it currently charges.

LOCAL SNIPPETS

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match against Hong Kong," said team coach Abu Yousuf yesterday.

M'bazar schools cricket

The Standard Chartered Bank Young Tigers School Cricket Tournament will start in Moulvibazar from today.

Matches of the tournament will be held at Saifur Rahman Stadium and Moulvibazar Government College ground.

Moulvibazar District Sports Association will manage the tournament. A total of 16 high schools will participate in it and the tournament will end on February 27.

CHANNEL SWIM

FROM FEB 27

Ten swimmers are expected to cross over from Teknaf to St Martins in the Shark Bangla Channel Crossing Expedition on February 27.

Members of the expedition club Daccabasescamp, the swimmers are taking part in their second adventure since taking part in scuba diving last year in the same region.

CEO and managing director of Benchmark Ashraf Kaiser and adviser

and trainer of Daccabasescamp Hamidul Haque signed an agreement at a signing ceremony held yesterday. One of the swimmers, Salman Saeed, was present on the occasion.

KCPSC ANNUAL SPORTS BEGIN

The five-day long annual sports of Khagrachhari Cantonment Public School & College (KCPSC) began yesterday.

Khagrachhari Cantonment Public School & College Principal Lt Col Mohammad Sharif has inaugurated the event by flying a pair of pigeons.

The primary competitions of twenty different sports events were held on the first day with over a few hundred students taking part.

The events were conducted by physical education and sports teacher Abdur Razzak.

After establishing the school & college, it's the first annual sports event.

RAJBARI CLINCH 'VBALL' TITLE

Rajbari clinched the NYK Line Women's Inter-District Volleyball trophy in the city yesterday.

In the final, Rajbari defeated Tangail 25-15, 25-23, 25-14. In the third-place playoff, Rajshahi beat last year's winner Pabna 25-22, 25-16, 25-18 to finish third.

Shahida Parvin, Farhana Akhtar and Lucky Khatun were named the best players of the tournament.

ARMY, AZAD, JURAIN WIN

Bangladesh Army beat Azad SC by 63-19 points with four creditable lonas in a match of the Premier Division Kabaddi League at the Kabaddi Stadium yesterday.

In the day's second match, Jurain Janata Club outplayed Dilkusha SC 39-21 with two creditable lonas after dominating the first half 25-14.

In the day's third match, Sonali Bank Club crushed Jatrabari Faruk Smriti Sangsad 53-15 with four creditable lonas after leading the first half 19-6.

In the day's last match, Bangladesh Rifles defeated Bangladesh Police 25-12 with one creditable lona after dominating the first half 15-5.

It's Collingwood again

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ground where recent one-day history has strongly favoured the side batting first.

Collingwood and Flintoff put on 97 for the fifth wicket to steady an England innings that was not helped by poor running between the wickets.

Collingwood was coming off successive centuries and again batted with great assurance, making a chanceless 70 before being caught behind attempting a cheeky reverse sweep off seamer Nathan Bracken (2-38).

Flintoff made 42 before falling to a freak return catch by fast bowler Brett Lee.

The England all-rounder sweetly struck a drive, but Lee took a superb reflex catch in his follow through.

The last over of England's innings was fittingly bowled by veteran Australia pace bowler Glenn McGrath, in his last game for his country at his home ground.

McGrath (2-41) sent the crowd into raptures when he claimed a wicket with his last ball, Paul Nixon caught by Hodge on the midwicket boundary for six.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of the second final of

the Commonwealth Bank Series between Australia and England at the Sydney Cricket Ground on Sunday:

ENGLAND

Joyce c Hodge b McGrath	15
Loye run out	45
Bell run out	26
Strauss c Gilchrist b Bracken	6
Collingwood c Gilchrist b Bracken	70
Flintoff c and b Lee	42
Dalrymple run out	5
Nixon c Hodge b McGrath	6
Plunkett not out	8
Extras: (b-5, lb-4, w-9, nb-5)	23
Total: (For 8 wkts in 50 overs)	246
Fall of wickets: 1-34, 2-79, 3-86, 4-112, 5-209, 6-231, 7-233, 8-246	
Did not bat: Mahmood, Panesar	

Bowler

	O	M	R	W
Lee	10	0	53	1
McGrath	10	0	41	2
Bracken	10	1	38	2
Watson	8	0	46	0
Hussey	2	0	12	0
Hogg	10	0	47	0

AUSTRALIA

Gilchrist b Plunkett	20
Hayden c Collingwood b Mahmood	5
Ponting c Strauss b Plunkett	7
Clarke c Nixon b Plunkett	0
Hussey c Strauss b Flintoff	0
Hodge c Bell b Dalrymple	49
Watson c Dalrymple b Collingwood	37

Hogg c Flintoff b Collingwood 10

Lee not out 10

Bracken not out 3

Extras: (lb-2, w-6, nb-3) 11

Total: (For 8 wkts in 27 overs) 152

Fall of wickets: 1-25, 2-33, 3-39, 4-40, 5-63, 6-109, 7-132, 8-139

Did not bat: McGrath

Bowler

	O	M	R	W
Plunkett	6	0	43	3
Mahmood	6	0	31	1
Flintoff	5	1	10	1
Panesar	2	0	15	0
Dalrymple	4	0	25	1
Collingwood	4	0	26	2

Result: England won by 34 runs (revised target of 187 from 27 overs under Duckworth-Lewis system) and win best-of-three finals series 2-0.

Man-of-the-match: Paul Collingwood.

Man-of-the-finals: Paul Collingwood.

Man-of-the-series: Ricky Ponting.

Toss: England.

Umpires: Ian Howell and Steve Davis.

Proteas pummel Pakistan

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Pollock set the tone with a superb opening spell in which he took two for eight in eight overs.

Pollock had Imran Nazir caught behind for nought off the fourth ball of the innings when Nazir got an inside edge to a ball which cut back sharply. Pollock did not concede a run until he bowled a wide in his fourth over.

The total was only six in 7.3 overs when Kamran Akmal was second man out after slipping in mid-pitch when he was sent back by Younis Khan, who played the ball towards Herschelle Gibbs in the covers.

Inzamam and Shoaib Malik put on 46 for the fifth wicket in the best stand of the innings before Malik was caught down the leg-side by Boucher off Justin Kemp.

Boucher joined Australia's Adam Gilchrist, England's Alec Stewart and Ridley Jacobs of the West Indies in making six dismissals. Gilchrist has performed the feat four times.

South Africa's reply was in complete contrast to the Pakistan innings.

Mohammad Asif, Pakistan's most reliable bowler, started uncharacteristically by spraying his first delivery far down the legside for five byes. AB de Villiers hit a two and a four as the first over cost 11 runs.

De Villiers and Smith both went on the attack, raising 50 off 51 balls and then accelerating as they took their side to the target off only 84 deliveries.

De Villiers made 50 not out off 44 balls with seven fours and a six, while Smith made an unbeaten 56 off 40 balls with six fours and two sixes.

Pakistan's misery was underlined when De Villiers gave the only chance of the innings. He tried to slog left-arm spinner Abdur Rehman out of the ground but sent the ball spiralling towards deep midwicket. Mohammad Asif was too casual in reaching the ball and dropped it. The batsmen ran two -- and then stole an overthrow after a poor throw.

Pakistan were without Shahid Afridi, the all-rounder who was banned for four matches by match referee Chris Broad for jabbing a bat at a spectator during the first match in Centurion last Sunday. Afridi was due to return home Sunday.

Afridi was replaced by Rehman.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of the fourth one-day international between South Africa and Pakistan at Newlands in Cape Town on Sunday:

PAKISTAN

Nazir c Boucher b Pollock	0
Akmal run out (Gibbs)	3
Younis c Kallis b Pollock	8
Yousuf c Boucher b Hall	21
Inzamam not out	45
Malik c Boucher b Kemp	19
Razaqqa b Kallis	1
Mahmood c Boucher b Kemp	1
Naved c Boucher b Ntini	3
Rehman c Boucher b Langeveldt	0
Asif b Hall	0

Extras: (lb-1, nb-1, w-4) 6

Total: (All out in 45.4 overs) 107

Fall of wickets: 1-0, 2-6, 3-23, 4-41, 5-87, 6-93, 7-94, 8-100, 9-106

Bowler

	O	M	R	W
Pollock	10	4	13	2
Ntini	10	2	20	1
Hall	6.4	0	29	2
Langeveldt	8	1	18	1
Kallis	8	1	17	1
Kemp	3	0	9	2

SOUTH AFRICA

De Villiers not out	50
Smith not out	56
Extras: (w-7)	7
Total: (For no loss in 14 overs)	113
Did not bat: Kallis, Gibbs, Prince, Kemp, Boucher, Pollock, Hall, Langeveldt, Ntini	

Bowler

	O	M	R	W
Asif	4	0	26	0
Naved	3	0	17	0
Mahmood	3	0	24	0
Razaqqa	2	0	19	0
Rehman	2	0	27	0

Result: South Africa won by 10 wickets and take 2-1 lead in the 5-ODI series.

Man-of-the-match: Shaun Pollock.

Toss: South Africa.

Umpires: Brian Jerling and Russell Tiffin.

Remaining match: Feb 14, Johannesburg.