

# Lanka's last-ball win

AFP, St John's



Dilhara Fernando took a wicket with the last ball of the match to seal a dramatic two-run win for Sri Lanka against England in their World Cup Super Eight's clash at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium here Wednesday. England, set 236 to win, finished on 233 for eight when Fernando (three for 41) bowled Ravi Bopara, whose career-best 52 off 53 balls so nearly set up an improbable win in only his fifth one-day international.

But Sri Lanka, who'd lost a one-wicket nail-biter to South Africa, held on with the 1996 champions moving a step closer to the semifinals.

England must now try to revive their ailing bid for a last four spot against world champions Australia here Sunday.

Bopara and Paul Nixon took England to the brink of a sensational win, after they'd been down and out at 133 for six in the 34th over, with a stand of 87.

England needed 77 to win off the last 10 overs with four wickets standing. Bopara and Nixon still in when 49 were required off five.

But after wicketkeeper Nixon reversed swept Muttiah Muralidaran for a six and a four, the target was 19 off two overs.

However, when Nixon holed out off Lasith Malinga to Sri Lanka captain Mahela Jayawardene for 42 off 44 balls, England were 220 for seven -- still requiring 16 off seven balls for victory.

But Bopara square cut Malinga's final ball for four and England needed 12 off the last over.

His cheeky sweep for four off Fernando then made it seven off four balls.

By the time Bopara faced the last

ball three were still needed only for the Essex all-rounder to be clean bowled.

Sajid Mahmood, who'd earlier taken a career-best four for 50, was two not out.

England were on course for victory at 101 for two.

But the unfortunate run out of Ian Bell (47) started a slump that saw four wickets lost for 32 runs in 49 balls.

Together with Kevin Pietersen (58), Bell put on 90 for the third wicket.

Well though England bowled, there was always the suspicion that Sri Lanka, had enough runs to play

with.

It certainly seemed that way as England lost both openers cheaply to be 11 for two.

Before this match England skipper Michael Vaughan said it was time he scored a hundred, having failed to reach three figures in a limited overs international.

Instead the England captain, in his 82nd match at this level, fell for nought when, shaping to glance Chaminda Vaas, he was caught by wicket-keeper Kumar Sangakkara.

Pietersen, rated the world's best

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## ENGLAND V SRI LANKA SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of the World Cup Super Eight's match between England and Sri Lanka at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium in Antigua on Wednesday:					
<b>Sri Lanka</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>4s</b>	<b>6s</b>	
Tharanga c Pietersen b Flintoff	62	103	2	0	
Jayasuriya b Mahmood	25	26	4	1	
Sangakkara c Collingwood b Mahmood	17	33	2	0	
Jayawardene c Joyce b Collingwood	56	61	4	0	
Silva b Flintoff	24	37	2	0	
Dilshan run out	5	6	0	0	
Arnold c Joyce b Mahmood	20	22	1	0	
Vaas c Collingwood b Flintoff	4	5	0	0	
Malinga c Nixon b Mahmood	2	7	0	0	
Muralidaran not out	2	2	0	0	
Fernando run out	2	2	0	0	
Extras: (b-3, lb-5, w-4, nb-4)	16				
Total: (All out in 50 overs)	235				
<b>Bowler</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>NB/W</b>
Anderson	10	1	39	0	
Mahmood	9	0	50	4	3nb, 2w
Flintoff	10	0	35	3	1nb
Collingwood	10	0	44	1	1w

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PHOTO: AFP

AND IT SEALS THE DEAL: England batsman Ravi Bopara loses his castle to Sri Lanka bowler Dilhara Fernando (not in picture) in the last delivery of the match during the World Cup Super Eight's encounter at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium in St. John's on Wednesday.



Did U Know?

If dismissals per match are an indicator then former West Indies wicketkeeper Ridley Jacobs is the most successful man behind stumps in World Cups to date with 22 victims in 11 matches.



### Habibul Bashar

(Bangladesh cricket captain)

"It's a little bit frustrating -- but I still believe in my players. They have shown they have the talent and the capabilities to get top runs. On his team's batting failures in the World Cup Super Eight's.



### ESPN

English Premier League  
Manchester City v Charlton Athletic  
Live at 10:10 pm  
Everton v Fulham  
Live at 12:25 am (Saturday)



B.League  
Rahmatgani v Ctg Mohammedan  
Venue: Bangabandhu National Stadium  
Time: 4:45 pm  
Abahani v Ctg Abahani  
Venue: MA Aziz Stadium (3:45 pm)

# Did Whatmore say it?

AP, Georgetown



Bangladesh coach Dav Whatmore declined comment on the possibility he may be asked to take over as India coach following the resignation of Greg Chappell.

Whatmore told a news conference, "Bangladesh. I'm here to talk about Bangladesh cricket only."

Born in Sri Lanka, Whatmore played Test cricket for Australia and has been mentioned as a possible replacement as India coach for the former Australian Test great Chappell.

He quit after star batsman Sachin Tendulkar -- whose pronouncements carry enormous weight in India -- said he had been hurt by the coach's criticism of Indian players' poor attitude at the World Cup.

The Indian team lost to Whatmore's Bangladesh in their opening match and were then knocked out of the tournament by Sri Lanka.

Coming to the end of his fourth year with Bangladesh, Whatmore said his contract expired this year. "I don't know what's next. I'll have to talk to the Bangladesh Cricket Board about it."

However the Times of India reports from St John's, well before Chappell announced his resigna-

tion as India coach on Wednesday, another Aussie, Whatmore, threw his hat in the ring for a shot at coaching the Men in Blue. There's a vacant chair in the Indian dressing room, and the musical chairs have already begun.

Whatmore, presently coaching Bangladesh, told Times of India on Tuesday that he was willing to take up the job if an "opportunity came along."

"I'm definitely interested," said Whatmore, who has had plenty of success with teams from the subcontinent.

He coached Sri Lanka to World Cup victory in 1996 and again got the Lankans to the semifinal round in 2003. His biggest strength as a coach is his penchant for hard work. "I work very hard to improve any team that is under my charge," said the portly Aussie, who has wrought wonders of sorts with the Bangladesh team.

However, Whatmore's success with Asian teams goes a little deeper than his work ethic. He was born in Colombo and spent some of his years growing up in the Sri Lankan capital before shifting to Australia. His parents and grandparents hail from Sri Lanka giving him a decided edge as far as culture goes.

"I'm very familiar with the way of life in the subcontinent. My parents and grandparents were Sri Lankan. My Asian roots and Western upbringing gives me a nice blend. So I really do enjoy working in the subcontinent."

Interestingly, Whatmore made his one-day debut under just-resigned Chappell. He believes his unique background has bolstered his coaching skills immensely. "I don't know if you can call that an advantage, but it has happened with me. That doesn't mean I can't be successful in a western environment. I've had some success with Lancashire as well."

However, Whatmore's greatest achievements have come with teams from the subcontinent. He loves the heat and intensity which the subcontinent exudes and is most happy working with Asian teams.

"I just love the heat and humidity. I don't mind working with young players who don't speak English. I'm comfortable with senior players too. I enjoy the food, the chaotic traffic, the noise... everything," said Whatmore.

Having worked with Sri Lanka and Bangladesh, India seems a logical destination on his radar. He feels coaching the Indian team would be a challenge. "This is what I do for a living. It makes sense to take up that terrific challenge," he said.

AFP reports from New Delhi that West Indian legend Vivian Richards has already offered to help India's cricketers in the aftermath of the World Cup and is a media favourite here.

News reports have also put Sri Lanka's quiet man Tom Moody at the top of the list of candidates alongside Indian stalwarts Sunil Gavaskar and Mohinder Amarnath.

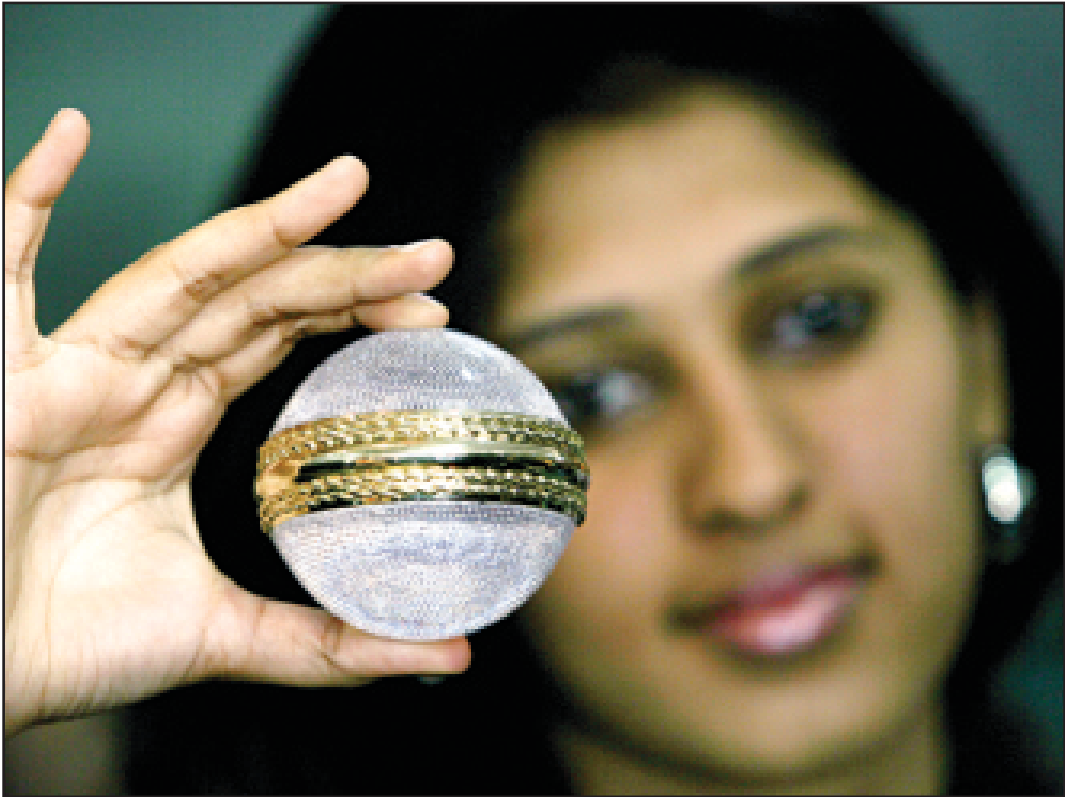


PHOTO: AFP

An Indian model poses with a diamond-studded cricket ball, which is a blend of 82.2 grams of gold and 30 carats of diamonds and costs 68,000 dollars at a showroom in Kolkata on Thursday. The ball will be awarded to the best player of the ongoing cricket World Cup.

## BCB slams the coach

CRICINFO, undated

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) criticised national coach Dav Whatmore after he expressed his interest in succeeding Greg Chappell as India coach.

The BCB were upset that Whatmore threw his hat in the ring while he was still in charge of Bangladesh's World Cup campaign.

"We are in the middle of a very high-profile tournament. At this stage any such interest of the coach would certainly distract our team,"

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## Reza flies out to replace Baisya

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh pace bowler Tapash Baisya has been ruled out of the World Cup after suffering an ankle injury while bowling in the World Cup Super Eight's match against Australia in Antigua on March 31.

Baisya has suffered ligament damage on his right ankle and

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### RIGHTS FOR INDIA-BANGLADESH SERIES BCB's

# GP, Nimbus to re-bid



SPORTS REPORTER

Only two organisations -- Nimbus and Grameenphone -- submitted their bids yesterday for the Title Sponsorship and In-Stadia Advertising Rights for Bangladesh's coming home series against India next month.

However, both the bids were much less than Bangladesh Cricket Board's expectation and the two organisations will re-bid tomorrow.

A total of five parties bought schedules but India-based Gameplan, Dubai-based Right Angle Media and Nokia did not submit their tenders before yesterday's deadline.

Grameenphone submitted their bid seconds before closing time and even after four long hours' hurried discussions among the board and the bidders, the deadlock could not be broken.

"The bids were far short of our expectation. They were much less

than we had in mind," told BCB vice-president and chairman of commercial committee Aziz Al Kaiser. Tito to the press after their evaluation.

"We have asked both Nimbus and Grameenphone to re-bid on Saturday," Tito added without disclosing the 'confidential' amounts.

Replying to a query, Tito said the BCB has the right to accept or reject the bids if they do not get the desired offer.

When asked why the bids were unsatisfactory, he said that after India's five-wicket defeat to Bangladesh in the World Cup, their market faced a setback and that might be a reason for this.

He, however, hoped for a successful conclusion on Saturday.

In case the board fails to take a decision after Saturday's re-bids, it would negotiate with interested business houses to choose the title sponsors for the series.

BCB vice-president Gazi Golam Dastagir, joint-secretary Reazuddin

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clarification

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) on Thursday sent a clarification on an article under the title 'A questionable deal' which appeared in The Daily Star's sports pages the same day. It read: 'We would like to point out that some of the comments in the report are erroneous. For example, the statement "interestingly, the BCB has disbursed the first instalment of US dollars 213,750, half of the total amount, within three days of the signing under a written invoice..." is incorrect. The fact is that no payments have been made to Cricket Australia on this account.

The question of "the fact remains that besides (Mahmudur) Rahman only general secretary Mahabubul Anam knows about the deal ...." is not correct. Moreover "The question ... whether the board identified their needs and had any comprehensive 'needs assessment' exercise".... is addressed in the agreement itself.

Our reply

We stand by our report. The board did not deny that it struck a deal with the CA (Cricket Australia) where it was clearly mentioned that the first instalment of the amount would have 'to be paid within ten (10) business days of the signing of this agreement provided the BCB has been provided with a written invoice for the fee.' We have

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PHOTO: TIGERCRIKET.COM

A LOT OF WEIGHT: Bangladesh all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan lifting weights during a gym session at Buddy's Gym in Georgetown on Wednesday.

They failed to go beyond the opening round in England where they could win just two matches. Their worst came in the next edition in South Africa where they failed to win a match.

Whatmore said he was looking

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