

Aussie, Aussie, Aussie

AFP, Bridgetown



Retiring Australia coach John Buchanan said it was his nation's destiny to be at the cutting edge of cricket after they'd won a third straight World Cup title.

Australia's victory over Sri Lanka by 53 runs in a rain-affected match here at Kensington Oval meant his players gave Buchanan, 54, a winning send-off in his last game as coach after eight years in charge.

Buchanan, whose first-class playing career extended to just seven matches with Queensland in the late 1970s, took charge of Australia shortly after their 1999 World Cup triumph.

Although supervising a gifted side, featuring 2007 World Cup man of the tournament Glenn McGrath, who retired as a player after Saturday's game, and Adam Gilchrist, whose 149 was the highest individual score in a World Cup Final, Buchanan has been credited with extending the team's horizons.

Buchanan, set to concentrate on what had been a motivational speaking sideline, had challenged the rest of the world to match Australia's standards after they beat India in the 2003 World Cup Final in Johannesburg.

But while now reluctant to pass on tips to other nations, Buchanan was clear where the sporting future of Australia, whose Institute of Sport in Canberra has been a template for many countries, lay.

"I think it's our role always to lead change, to lead new ideas to be right at the cutting edge of cricket or of sport in fact."

"Then it's up to other countries to try to chase us," Buchanan, formerly coach of Queensland and English county Middlesex, added.

"I think in a sense we're not interested in what other countries have to do, it's what we still have to do."

India, following the resignation of Greg Chappell and West Indies, after the departure of Bennett King, are between two leading sides looking for a new coach after World Cup failures.

But Buchanan said he'd no interest in becoming the latest Australian to take charge of another country.

"I suppose you can never say never but right at the moment no. I feel very loyal to the team that I coach and the players that I've worked with. So right at the moment I'm looking to venture into new territory altogether. This sort of role will be a thing of the past for me."

Buchanan said the key to Australia's enduring success -- they

SEE PAGE 18 COL 5



CLASS OF 2007: Australian players pose with the World Cup trophy after their victory over Sri Lanka in the final at the Kensington Oval in Bridgetown on Saturday.

PHOTO: AFP



Did U Know?

India's commercial capital Mumbai has been chosen as the venue for the 2011 Cricket World Cup final while Lahore and Colombo will stage the semifinals of the cricketing extravaganza. Bangladesh capital Dhaka will organise the opening ceremony.



Nasser Hussain

(Former England cricket captain)
"Australia are the winners but cricket has been the loser. It's not a money-making exercise, it's about people."
On World Cup final.



ESPN

English Premiership
Reading v Newcastle United
Live at 12:55 am (Tuesday)



B.League

Muktijoddha v Arambagh
Time: 4:00pm
Venue: Bangabandhu National Stadium

The McGrath exit

AFP, Bridgetown



Glenn McGrath said linking up with old com-rade Adam Gilchrist was the perfect way for him to take his last wicket in international cricket after Australia had won their third successive World Cup final with a 53-run win against Sri Lanka.

McGrath, 37, and the man of the tournament after a record-breaking haul of 26 wickets, the most at a single World Cup, had a relatively subdued end to his illustrious career, having already announced he would retire after this event.

But he got in on the act, when having Sri Lanka's Russel Arnold -- also playing his last match for his country before his retirement -- caught by diving wicket-keeper

Gilchrist sprinting forward to take a catch at Kensington Oval here Saturday.

The duo, now only two out of three players along with Australia captain Ricky Ponting to have won three World Cups after starring in the 1999 and 2003 triumphs, have formed a potent combination in both Test and one-day cricket, 'caught Gilchrist bowled McGrath' a familiar mode of dismissal for many batsmen.

"I guess it was nice to finish off with a catch behind with Gilly," McGrath told reporters after Saturday's match having become during the course of the tournament the World Cup's most successful bowler of all-time with 71 wickets.

That was well ahead of Pakistan great Wasim Akram's mark of 55 in 38 matches to the Australian's 39.

"It was the perfect way to finish and I'm happy with that."

And McGrath said he hoped the

over-riding cricketing memory of the first World Cup staged in the Caribbean would be Australia's sustained excellence rather than the chaos in the final's closing moments.

Players, rightly thinking the game was over, were forced back onto the field by an umpiring blunder after officials wrongly ruled Sri Lanka had to bat out the day in pitch-black conditions.

"I think it would be disappointing if you focussed on 15 or 20 minutes of the whole tournament rather than the way we played throughout," said McGrath.

"In my mind we didn't just want to win every game in the tournament, but win every game convincingly and I think we achieved that and hopefully that is how this tournament will be remembered.

Ponting had wanted McGrath, Test cricket's most successful

SEE PAGE 18 COL 8

Tushar likely to return

SPORTS REPORTER

The national selectors are expected to discuss on one change when they meet this morning to finalise the one-day squad for next month's home series against India.

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) will announce a 14-member team for the three-match series against Rahul Dravid's side.

Although the selection panel hinted at an unchanged squad from the World Cup side, middle-order batsman Tushar Imran looks set to get back his place. Rajin Saleh, who returned from the Caribbean without playing any match, is likely to make way for Tushar.

Tushar, the right-hander who recently captained Bangladesh A in the home series against England A and the away series in Sri Lanka, is in good touch.

The axe can also fall on right-arm paceman Shahadat Hossain. The Test team for the two-match series will be announced during the one-day series.

SL fans satisfied

AFP, Colombo



Disappointed Sri Lankan cricket fans drew solace Sunday from their team's performance despite seeing them lose to Australia in the World Cup final.

The team responded well when rain forced the match to be cut short to 38 overs, which upset their momentum and favoured Australia, the fans said.

"We are a side playing very orthodox cricket with a natural flair. The overs restriction was something that was not in our game plan," said Hashan Tillakaratne, a member of the Sri Lankan team that won the World Cup in 1996.

Popular commentator Roshan Abeysinghe said the shortened innings suited Australia's attacking

batsmen.

"We do not have the players to play the power game required in that type of scenario -- the 38 over slog was tailor made for them," the Sri Lankan said.

Australia completed a 53-run victory on the Duckworth-Lewis method in virtual darkness at the Kensington Oval in Barbados on Saturday, winning the World Cup for a record third successive time.

Adam Gilchrist's blitzkrieg was a key factor in the match, said coach and cricket writer Ranjan Paranavithana.

"He was unstoppable and was playing the same sort of destructive innings played by Clive Lloyd and Viv Richards in previous cup finals," he said.

Sri Lanka's bowlers contained Matthew Hayden and Ricky Ponting relatively well, but Gilchrist's superlative performance took them by surprise, Paranavithana said.

The island nation's fans believe

the Sri Lankans faced a team simply too good for them on the day.

"I feel sorry for them. They did try their best and it is not a disgrace," said Sonali Perera, a bank employee.

She and her colleagues would greet the team on its return despite the loss, Perera said.

Elderly fan Stanley Weerasinghe said everyone knew the Australians were powerful and blamed bad luck.

"Sri Lankans just did not have the luck. They will be a powerful team at the next World Cup with only Jayasuriya, Muralidaran and Atapattu likely to retire by then," he said.

Sri Lanka's captain Mahela Jayawardene was unlucky with the toss and if it had not rained and Sri Lanka had batted first, then it

SEE PAGE 18 COL 1

The final dilemma

AFP, Bridgetown



It may have rained sixes and fours in the World Cup final between Australia and Sri Lanka here, but the tournament still awaits the first really competitive finale in more than a decade.

It was not difficult to spot the winners after Australian opener Adam Gilchrist hammered a Cup-final record of 149 in his team's 281-4 in the rain-hit final at Kensington Oval here on Saturday.

Man-of-the-match Gilchrist smashed his captain Ricky Ponting's record of 140 in the final, against India in the 2003 edition in South Africa. He cracked eight sixes and 13 fours in his 104-ball knock.

Sri Lanka were restricted to 215-8 while chasing a rain-revised target of 269 off 36 overs to lose by 53 runs in a game in which they matched Australia only when Sanath Jayasuriya (63) and Kumar Sangakkara (54) were at the crease.

It all began when middle-order batsman Aravinda de Silva smashed a brilliant unbeaten century to steer Sri Lanka to a seven-wicket victory against Mark Taylor's Australians at Lahore in Pakistan in 1996.

Australia ruled the next three World Cups in England, South Africa and the West Indies, giving no chance to their opponents in the

finals.

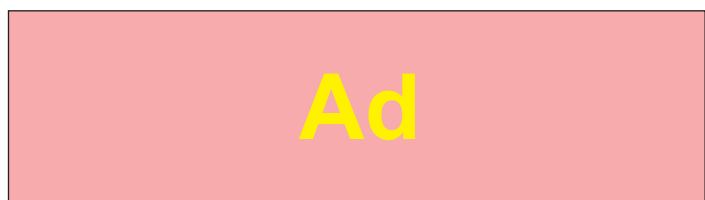
Pakistan were the first victims when they lost by eight wickets against Steve Waugh's Australians who finished the 50-over final in the 21st over at Lord's in 1999 after a superb spell from leg-spinner Shane Warne.

Warne grabbed four wickets to

restrict Pakistan to a modest 132 before Gilchrist finished the match with a half-century.

Ponting hijacked the 2003 final against India at Johannesburg as he smashed an unbeaten 140 to set up a 360-run target, which always looked beyond Sourav Ganguly's side.

SEE PAGE 18 COL 6



AUSTRALIA V SRI LANKA SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of the World Cup final between Australia and Sri Lanka at the Kensington Oval in Bridgetown, Barbados on Saturday (match reduced to 38 overs a side because of rain):					
AUSTRALIA	R	M	B	4s	6s
Gilchrist c Silva b Fernando	149	129	104	13	8
Hayden c Jayawardene b Malinga	38	100	55	3	1
Ponting run out (Jayawardene)	37	53	42	1	1
Symonds not out	23	39	21	2	0
Watson b Malinga	3	3	3	0	0
Clarke not out	8	10	6	1	0
Extras: (lb-4, w-16, nb-3)	23				
Total: (For 4 wickets in 38 overs)	281				
Did not bat: Hussey, Hogg, Bracken, Tait, McGrath.					
Fall of wickets: 1-172, 2-224, 3-261, 4-266.					
Bowler	O	M	R	W	NB/W
Vaas	8	0	54	0	nb-2, w-1
Malinga	8	1	49	2	-
Fernando	8	0	74	1	nb-1, w-4
Muralidaran	7	0	44	0	w-2
Dilshan	2	0	23	0	w-1
Jayasuriya	5	0	33	0	-
SEE PAGE 18 COL 6					

SEE PAGE 18 COL 6

Ticketing rights go to AB Bank

SPORTS REPORTER

The AB Bank is going to get the ticket selling rights for Bangladesh's upcoming home series against India.

The commercial bank will sign a deal today with the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) at a local hotel.

It was learnt that the bank has agreed to give Tk 65 lakh to the board for a deal valid for the next two years.

Earlier, City Bank enjoyed the rights.

Rajapakse hails team

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lanka's president Sunday congratulated the national team's World Cup effort and pledged to help the side prepare for the future after their finals loss to Australia.

President Mahinda Rajapakse, who travelled to Barbados for the finals match, said captain Mahela Jayawardene and his teammates did a great job in the two-month tournament.

"I congratulate the captain and members of the Sri Lanka cricket team on the success in finishing runners-up in the ICC World Cup 2007 tournament," he said in a statement.

"I take this occasion to renew my government's pledge to give all

SEE PAGE 18 COL 1



PHOTO: AFP

Sri Lanka captain Mahela Jayawardene (L) and his Australian counterpart Ricky Ponting are engaged in a mid-pitch conference after a confusion over bad light near the end of their World Cup final match at the Kensington Oval in Bridgetown, Barbados on Saturday.