

SLC won't rush

CRICINFO, undated

Sri Lanka will not rush into appointing a new coach but will bide their time before naming Tom Moody's successor, said Jayantha Dharmadasa, the Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) chief.

Moody's term ends after the ongoing one-day series against Pakistan in Abu Dhabi.

Dharmadasa indicated that SLC was keen for Rumesh Ratnayake, the former Sri Lankan fast bowler, to be the interim coach for the series against Bangladesh in June. Initially, they had thought of Trevor Penney, Moody's assistant, for the role but Penney is also leaving at the end of his contract to join Moody in Western Australia.

Dharmadasa said that he had already spoken to Ratnayake and was in the process of trying to contact him to finalise matters. Ratnayake is at present a development officer of the Asian Cricket Council of which Dharmadasa is the president.

Moody was also helping SLC in finding a suitable coach to take the team to the next World Cup in 2011. "He has come up with a few names and we are also conducting our own research to have an appropriate candidate who can continue the good work Moody has done with the national team so far," said Dharmadasa.

He said that John Wright, the former New Zealand batsman and India coach, wasn't interested in coaching any national sides. Wright was one of the candidates for the job. This leaves SLC with six other candidates to consider. At the top of their list are Jamie Siddons, Dave Houghton, Greg Shipperd, Terry Oliver, Trevor Bayliss and Graham Ford.

Siddons is assistant coach of the Australian team and a senior coach at the Center for Excellence in Brisbane. Houghton, the former Zimbabwe captain is presently coaching Derbyshire. Shipperd is the coach of Victoria while Oliver had success coaching Queensland. Bayliss made his mark as head coach of New South Wales and Ford who coaches Kent was a former coach of South Africa.

Doubts grow

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Seshaiah, the Kingston pathologist, was wrong to say that Woolmer had been strangled. But Seshaiah told the paper that he stood by his diagnosis that Woolmer was killed by "asphyxia as a result of manual strangulation". Nevertheless, the future of the investigation now seems to centre on the results of toxicology tests.

But a senior Jamaican police officer told the newspaper that that it now looked likely that Woolmer died from a heart attack induced by sickness. "I would go for natural causes," he said. "The scene was not disturbed. If someone was strangled you would expect some resistance or fight."

In another development, it was suggested that Mark Shields, the lead investigator, travelled to South Africa last week to inform Woolmer's widow that her husband may not have been murdered.

Valencia move

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minute through a penalty by Tarragona's Javier Portillo but, far from being the winner, Xisco popped up in the second minute of injury time to score and earn a point for Betis.

Real Madrid, who lead Barcelona in the table because of results in matches between them, play at Huelva on Sunday while Barcelona travel to Atletico Almagir.

Mourinho

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van der Sar with the deftest of clipped finishes.

It was Drogba's 33rd goal of the season, a tally that also includes the winner in the League Cup final against Arsenal in February.

But the Ivory Coast forward had to share the plaudits with Cech, who pulled off a superb double save to deny Wayne Rooney and Giggs at the start of the second-half before coming to his side's rescue again in extra-time.



Did U Know?

Sourav Ganguly of India scored 100 runs from 165 balls in the first innings of the first Test against Bangladesh at the Chittagong Divisional Stadium on May 19. It was his thirteenth century, first against Bangladesh.



PHOTO: AFP

Swiss star Roger Federer exults after defeating Spaniard Rafael Nadal during the ATP Masters final in Hamburg on Sunday.

Federer halts Nadal



AFP, Hamburg

Roger Federer produced an astonishing turn-around to beat Rafael Nadal for the first time on clay courts in the final of the Hamburg Masters on Sunday.

The triple Grand Slam titleholder's 2-6, 6-2, 6-0 win over the French Open champion underlined his belief that he has a chance of winning in Paris in three weeks time and becoming the first player since Rod Laver in 1969 to hold all four Grand Slams at the same time.

It was Nadal's first loss on clay in more than two years and ended his record-breaking 81-match winning streak on this surface.

But it required an amazing twist for it to come about. For an hour of the match Federer, whose form has been in a slump, looked a beaten man.

He was quickly behind, and after being outplayed in the first set, was almost a break of serve down in the second. But after averting the crisis, Federer's level went up so far so fast that he took eleven of the next 12 games and the match.

It suggested that for Federer, who admitted to having been affected by his decision to part with coach Tony Roche last weekend, the match was played as much with the emotions as with the risk-taking brilliance of his tennis.

Federer nevertheless made a discouraging start. He could only get five first serves in during an opening service game of 14 points,

and in his second service game he was broken.

The world's most fluently versatile all-court player played all but one of these rallies from the back, almost certainly a legacy of this game's opening point in which Federer was beaten at the net by a sensational flat pass down the line from Nadal.

It got worse for the world number one as he dropped serve again to go 1-4 down, during which he attempted one wildly ambitious forehand drive from very wide out on the backhand side, which missed, and mis-hit a backhand drive completely at game point.

Nadal was playing his usual relentless weighty rear court game, varying the angles but taking few chances, and the rewards were coming unexpectedly fast against an uncertain opponent.

Federer got a warm round of applause from the crowd when he opened the second set with his best service game so far, but then he sunk to a new low, from which he seemed unlikely to recover.

First he unaccountably launched a smash into the net from half way up the court, which would have given him two break points, and it made the crowd groan. Then having allowed Nadal back to parity at 1-1, Federer sank to 15-40 on his serve.

But recover he did. Perhaps it was a feeling that things could not get worse which made it possible, for Federer attacked his way freely and impressively to four points in a row, two of them won from the net.

After this he sprung to life.

Immediately he broke Nadal's serve for the first time, pummeling three fierce forehand winners, one of them with a return of serve which Nadal could not even lay a racket on.

And then he broke Nadal again in the eighth game. By this time the clay court king was beginning to look disconcerted by the penetration of the Federer attacks and was making uncharacteristic errors of his own.

Once Nadal pulled a forehand wide from a good position and pulled a face in disgust and then attempted a drop shot and netted it, throwing his head back in disbelief.

But Federer was playing unbelievably. His ground strokes were just as forcing but now with far fewer errors, and after Nadal had put a forehand wide at the end of a long rally to drop serve at 0-2 in the final set, it was clear the character of the match had altered.

Federer was also coming to the net more now, although on the most crucial point of the final set, the point which opened the door to a double break of serve at 4-0, he hesitated to come in.

At the second attempt he did so however, and his second volley elicited the passing shot error from Nadal that he had been hoping for.

"I don't have pressure," Nadal had said before the final. "If I win or lose tomorrow I will arrive at the French Open with good preparation and the same confidence -- the work is done."

The correctness of that assertion will now be fully tested.1

LOCAL SNIPPETS

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AB Bank Dhaka Metropolis Table Tennis League at the Wooden Floor Gymnasium.

Rana, Hasib and Nasir helped Sports World trounce South East Club 3-0 while wins from Rubel, Rimon and Helal gave TTA a much-deserved 3-0 win over Combined Sporting Club. In the other match of the day, Palolic Group beat Barna 3-1.

BOOST U-13 CRICKET

Basic Cricket Academy crushed Maple Leaf International School by eight wickets in the Boost Power Cup Under-13 Cricket tournament at the Kalabagan Cricket Ground.

Batting first after winning the toss, Maple Leaf could only muster 80 runs from 10 overs with Jahin hitting 27 off 38 balls.

Shohag, Shafiul, Rusjbi and Khan took two wickets each for the Academy side.

In their reply, Basic notched up the total in only 8 overs with Araf hitting 20 and Raj chipping in with 18 runs.

Khan was adjudged the man-of-the-match for his bowling performance.

Billy bids

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ahead before French midfielder Yoann Gourcuff equalised.

Antonio Di Natale restored the visitors' lead only for Costacurta to level the score from the spot when Gourcuff was fouled in the box.

Barreto ruined Costacurta's farewell party, capitalising on a moment of hesitancy in the Milan defence to snatch the winner.

Milan's defeat left them in third place on 61 points, with one game left to play. Milan will be overtaken by Lazio if the Rome club avoid defeat at home to Parma on Sunday.

Costacurta began his career with third division Monza in 1986 and spent one year there before joining Milan, with whom he has been ever since.

He has won seven Serie A titles and four European Cups, and made 59 appearances for Italy between 1991 and 1998.

Cook extends

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Collingwood 11.5 2 34 1

Panesar 36.1 3 129 6

ENGLAND: Second innings
Strauss c Morton b Collymore 52
Cook not out 52
Shah c Ramdin b Collymore 4
Pietersen not out 21
Extras: (b-1, lb-2, nb-1) 4
Total: (For 2 wks in 32 overs) 105
Fall of wickets: 1-35, 2-51

To bat: Collingwood, Bell, Prior, Plunkett, Hoggard, Harmison, Panesar.

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Panesar	8	0	37	0
Collymore	8	1	17	2
Gayle	4	2	7	0
Bravo	8	2	20	0
Taylor	4	0	21	0

Pak make 313

SPORTS REPORTER

Pakistan piled up an impressive 313-9 at the end of their 50 overs in their second ODI against Sri Lanka at the Sheikh Zayed Stadium in Abu Dhabi on Sunday.

Spurred on by the efforts of Salman Butt (74) and Yasir Hameed (50) the Pakistan lower-order had just the foundations necessary for a big total.

Opener Butt struck eleven fours in an attractive knock while Hameed had seven hits across the fence.

Although last match hero Shahid Afridi failed to fire, the Pakistan batting was impressive with captain Shoaib Malik striking a quickfire 19-ball 27 while wicketkeeper Kamran Akmal hit 38.

They were also given a late spurt by bowler Mohammed Sami, who clubbed 22 off 12 balls with three fours and a six to help the score over the run-a-ball margin.

All the Sri Lanka bowlers came in for stick but Malinga Bandara emerged with some credit after scalping 3-56 off his ten overs.

Juve back

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However, Italy keeper Gianluigi Buffon, Trezeguet and Czech midfielder Pavel Nedved demonstrated their loyalty by sticking it out in a lower division, while former Juve midfielder Deschamps was hired to replace Capello.

Deschamps understood the need to add youth to experience and placed his trust in the feet of several youngsters, including striker Raffaele Palladino, midfielder Marco Marchionni and defender Federico Balzaretti.

The match-fixing scandal erupted last May when newspapers published transcripts of telephone conversations in which former Juventus general manager Luciano Moggi tells Pierluigi Pairetto, head of the Italian referees' association and member of UEFA's referees committee, which officials he wants assigned to certain league and European matches.

The conversations revealed that Moggi and fellow director Antonio Giraudo effectively controlled the pool of referees who ensured Juventus benefited from their decisions.

The referees would overlook fouls committed by Juve players and disallow perfectly good goals scored against his team.

Moggi also planned ahead, ordering referees to book or send off talented players of teams who would be facing Juventus the following week, so that they would be suspended for the Juve match.

Moggi was hit with a five-year ban from football, but it seems that the scandal is set to run and run.

Earlier this month former Juventus director Maurizio Capobianco claimed the club gave expensive gifts to referees and FIGC officials.

Capobianco, who worked for Juve from 1984 to 2005, made the allegations in an interview with an Italian newspaper and has been called up by the FIGC to explain his comments.

Juventus hit back saying Capobianco made his outburst because he is involved in a legal dispute with the club.

Hoggard set to miss Test

Panesar aims to cash in on the opportunity



BBC ONLINE, undated

England's Matthew Hoggard seems certain to miss the rest of the first Test against the West Indies after tearing a thigh muscle on Saturday.

The seamer left the field before lunch on the third day after suffering the injury during his follow-through.

Hoggard did not take to the field on Sunday and is believed to have suffered a grade one tear which could rule him out of further matches in the series.

His absence will limit England's options as they push for victory.

England's pace attack largely misfired on Day Three on Saturday and it was left to spinner Monty Panesar to take up the responsibility of providing some control.

Durham pacesman Steve Harmison faced badly after a decent start and failed to take a wicket from his 22 overs, while Liam Plunkett's two scalps came at a cost of 81 runs.

Paul Collingwood was also employed by Strauss, the all-rounder taking 1-34 off 11.5 overs.

However, Panesar was happy to take the opportunity to bowl more overs in the absence of the Hoggard.

In Hoggard's absence, Panesar toiled for 31 overs, taking 4-108, but the visitors ended the day on 363-7 chasing 553-5.

"I guess I had to get involved and bowl a few more overs than expected, but it went really well for me," he said.

"I just wanted to get the ball in the right areas. There was a bit of green still on the wicket so I knew it would not turn too big and I had to keep a consistent line.

"And that helped me. A few went on with the arm and it brought me a few lbw decisions.

"I guess I can count myself lucky that umpires are more willing to give batsman out lbw when the ball raps them on the front pad these days, but it's also something I have worked on -- bowling straighter on a good length."

And the Northamptonshire spinner said the side would target early wickets on Sunday morning in a bid to secure victory from the first Test.

"We probably didn't bowl as well as we would have liked as a unit out there, but hopefully we

can all get it right in the morning.

"We're in a good position and, if we can get our rhythm right, we can take wickets. If we do that early, we feel we can build a big lead and take it from there."

Lamps salutes

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grew up dreaming of winning. Of course we want to win the league but you can't take away a cup double."

Lampard has been locked in contract talks with the club as his current deal enters its' final two years and he rubbished reports that he was considering a move to Spain.

The England midfielder is reported to want parity with Andriy Shevchenko and Michael Ballack, who are Chelsea's highest earners at 120,000 pounds a week, but Lampard has no doubts that his future remains at Stamford Bridge.

"These are my people and I want to stay," he said. "This is my club and I hope I can sort it out soon because I want to stay forever.

"That's my intention. It's in the club's hands and I hope it gets sorted out very soon."

Bravo not surprised



AFP, London

West Indies all-rounder Dwayne Bravo admitted he wasn't surprised that England fast bowler Stephen Harmison was "so bad" during the ongoing first Test at Lord's.

The tourists, at stumps on Saturday's third day, were 363 for seven, after avoiding the follow-on. But that still left them 190 behind England's first innings 553 for five declared.

They will resume with senior batsman Shivnarine Chanderpaul 63 not out.

The left-hander shared valuable partnerships of 92 with Bravo, whose 56 featured a run-a-ball fifty, and 87 with Denesh Ramdin who made a dashing 60 before falling shortly before the close.

England left-arm spinner Monty Panesar took four for 108 on an unhelpful pitch during a spell of 31 overs in all, including 29 interrupted only by lunch and tea.

West Indies were aided by Harmison and fellow Durham quick Liam Plunkett conceding 16

wides between them -- just two shy of the Test innings record of 18 set by West Indies at Old Trafford three years ago.

"It wasn't a surprise for us that he was so bad," Bravo told reporters after Harmison finished the day with figures of none for 95 in 22 overs in what was the 28-year-old bowler's first international match since his disappointing Ashes tour.

"We know he can be world-class but we also know he can spray it around as well," Bravo added.

Plunkett at least had the consolation of taking two important wickets, bowling experienced opener Chris Gayle for 30 and removing Denesh Ramdin, following the wicket-keeper's impressive 60, with the aid of a diving slip catch from Paul Collingwood, the third Durham man in England's XI.

Bravo, who gave his wicket away when he hooked medium-pace Collingwood to Alastair Cook at deep square leg, insisted West Indies could still avoid defeat in the opening match of this four-Test series.

"Of course we are in the game. Shivnarine Chanderpaul is still there and the other guys need to

support him," Bravo said.

Harmison often made life tough for debutant wicketkeeper Matt Prior and his inaccuracy was compounded by England being a bowler short after losing specialist Matthew Hoggard limped off with a thigh injury.

Harmison infamously began England's 5-0 Ashes series thrashing with a huge wide to Justin Langer.

That was the start of a lacklustre trip for Harmison who only took 10 wickets in five Tests in Australia and then announced his retirement from one-day internationals.

Although there wasn't too much in a third day pitch for the quicks, there was arguably even less on offer for Panesar.

"The pitch itself, you are not going to get it to turn from leg to off," the spinner said.

Asked about Harmison, Panesar added: "He wanted to bowl a bit better than he did but he's still positive and he'll be firing tomorrow (Sunday)."

Tendulkar

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with a final decision expected by the second week of June.

Tendulkar praised Shastri for the way he has handled the interim appointment.

"It always helps to have a positive person," he said. "Ravi has been a great help as I know what he expects from me and he knows what is to be expected from me.

"We have played cricket together. He has a good cricketing brain. He played lot of Test matches and has got many runs."

Nedved mulling

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this season to get them back into Italy's top flight after the famous Turin club was demoted to the second division following a match fixing scandal.

"Finding fresh motivation will probably be more difficult and if I am to continue I must have some goals. Everything is still open," he added.

Nedved moved to Italy from Sparta Prague in 1996, playing for Lazio Rome before his move to Juventus.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

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