

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 Ramesh 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 Madrid.

Mourinho

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van der Sar with the deftest of clipped finishes.

It was Drogbba'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

Tennis

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 six 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, after this he sprung to life.

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 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.

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

Immediately he broke Nadal's serve for the first time, pummelling 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."

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 of teams who would be facing Juventus the following week, so that they would be suspended for the Juve match.

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.

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

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 24

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 wkts in 32 overs) 105

Fall of wickets: 1-35, 2-51.

To bat: Collingwood, Bell, Prior, Panesar, Harmison, Collymore.

Bowler O M R W

Powell 8 0 37 0

Collymore 8 1 17 2

Gayle 4 2 7 0

Bravo 8 2 20 0

Taylor 4 0 21 0

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