

Malinga to join Kent

APP, Colombo

Sri Lanka's star fast bowler Lasith Malinga is to join English county Kent for just under a month, the governing body of the sport here, Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC), said Thursday.

Malinga becomes the fourth Sri Lankan to play for an English county in the current season -- Muttiah Muralidaran is at Lancashire, Kumar Sangakkara at Warwickshire and Chaminda Vaas at Middlesex.

"I am delighted with this opportunity to play county cricket after a short international career," Malinga said. He was approached earlier in the season, but had rejected the offer at the time.

The right-arm fast bowler, who is known for his fierce yorker, will be the third Sri Lankan to play at Canterbury following Aravinda De Silva and Muttiah Muralidaran.

He is due to return to Sri Lanka at the end of this month in time for the preparations for the Twenty20 world cup in South Africa, SLC officials said.

Chawla wreaks havoc

APP, New Delhi

Leg-spinner Piyush Chawla came up with match haul of 10 for 58 as India A thrashed a Zimbabwe XI by an innings and 233 runs in a four-day match at the Queens Sports Club in Bulawayo.

After his first innings figures of four for 12, Chawla yesterday captured 6 for 46 to rock the Zimbabwe batting line-up and help the visitors sweep the two-match series.

The home team was on the back-foot when they resumed their first innings on day three at 67 for 5.

Chawla and Pragyan Ojha claimed four wickets each to wrap up the Zimbabweans for 143.

After being asked to follow on, the Zimbabwe openers -- Tino Mawoyo and Hamilton Masakadza -- again provided a good start to their team, notching up 63 runs before allowing any damage to happen.

However, once India A achieved the breakthrough, the Zimbabwe batsmen fell like nine pins as six of them failed to open their account. Masakadza's defiant knock of 73 was the only bright spot in the hosts' batting as they were all out for 148 in the second essay.

Wrecker-in-chief Chawla's six wickets helped him finish with 18 scalps in two matches.

From Chawla, paceman Irfan Pathan emerged as the most successful bowler for the Indians. The Baroda seamer, who was wicketless in the first innings, had three wickets for 12 runs in the second.

India A will fly to Kenya for two three-day matches and a one-day tri-series involving Sri Lanka A as the third team.

'Deco not for'

FROM PAGE 24

to be here because I love Barca, but life always goes on. The day could arrive when Barcelona do not want me, but it seems that that day is not yet here.'

Regarding the comments from Laporta, Deco added: 'This leaves me very happy. If the club do not want to sell me, the coach wants me and I want to continue, then that is how it will be. (I want) to fight to play and help Barca return to being champions.'

Podolski back

FROM PAGE 24

Having scored 22 goals for Germany in 38 appearances, Podolski faces stiff competition to win back his place in the Bayern team after the summer arrival of Italian World Cup winner Luca Toni and German veteran Miroslav Klose.

Bayern begin their Bundesliga campaign at newly promoted Hansa Rostock on August 11.

'Turn off the mic'

FROM PAGE 21

Sreesanth, their fastest bowler, fined 50 percent of his match fee for barging Vaughan and causing further concern with a beamer bowled at Kevin Pietersen and a no-ball bouncer delivered after he'd overstepped the crease by several feet.

Madgalle, at the end of the second Test, made it clear he would be speaking to both sides regarding their behaviour before the series finale gets underway at The Oval on August 9.

"I would hate the jelly bean thing to overshadow the cricket," said Moores. "They shouldn't have done it and it's one of those things where it was meant to be a joke and the game looks a bit silly at the end of it."

"We saw (on the final morning) the team being aggressive by how they bowled which was exciting to watch," Moores added.

"We've got to come back at The Oval and show we've got something left to try to win that Test and level the series."

Sharapova's sharp return

Tennis

APP, California

Maria Sharapova made a formidable start to the summer hardcourt season, the US Open champion crushing Thai Tamarine Tanasugarn 6-1, 6-3 in the second round of the San Diego Classic Wednesday.

The Florida-based Russian world number two launched her title defence with apparent ease as she returned to competition for the first time since falling in the fourth round at Wimbledon to eventual champion Venus Williams.

"I feel good, I did all the right things," Sharapova said. "I'm moving well. But you never know how you are until you play match. Things are going well."

The two-time grand slam champion showed no sign of discomfort from the lingering shoulder worry which required a pain-killing injection in the spring.

"My shoulder doesn't hurt - but I'm not at 100 percent either. But I've been talking about it so long that I feel I'm repeating myself."

"I just want to go out and play tennis," she said. "It's not getting worse and I know it will eventually get better."

Sharapova skipped Russia's Fed Cup tie last month against the United States amid harsh home criticism, saying she needed to rest her injury.

The 20-year-old, who lifted the 2006 title here without the loss of a set, beat Kim Clijsters in the final, made a perfect start to her defence and led a string of Russians into the third round.

Three other seeded Russians and world number 42 Maria Kirilenko all advanced in straight sets.

Third seed Anna Chakvetadze extended her summer win streak to 10 matches, crushing Meghann Shaughnessy 6-4, 6-4.

Chakvetadze, ranked sixth, had polished her finals record to six-for-six with last weekend's triumph in Stanford over India's tennis princess Sania Mirza.

Number eight Dinara Safina eliminated Camille Pin of France 6-1, 6-4 and ninth seed Elena Dementieva was beaten German Angelique Kerber 6-1, 6-2.

Kirilenko upset Czech 16th seed Lucie Safarova 6-4, 7-6 (7/3).

Tenth-seeded Wimbledon champion Venus Williams was untroubled in a 6-2, 6-4 defeat of Frenchwoman Virginie Razzano, with the American committing 41 unforced errors against 30 winners.

Williams won this tournament in 2000, 2001 and 2002, but is making her first appearance after a five-year absence.

Her last defeat in this event came in 1999, when she lost the final to Martina Hingis, this year's seventh seed.

"I played well, I had some errors, but I was aggressive," Williams said. "She played her best tennis and didn't give me any free points."

"I'm relaxed and confident, if I'm down a break I know I can do what



PHOTO: AFP

Maria Sharapova of Russia in action against Tamarine Tanasugarn of Thailand during her match at the La Costa Resort and Spa at Carlsbad in California on Wednesday.

Making their own rules

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

loss to New Zealand is an issue worth pursuing (it isn't) we should ask why the team's rules on drinking are policed by the players themselves.

The company line is that they are mature professionals who are able to maintain their self-discipline. Why, then, would they object to an independent authority taking a look at their mature, professional, disciplined behaviour after hours and dealing with the few who fall foul of the code?

The bleakest answer to that question is that South African cricket has faced victim not to a culture of drinking but to a culture of untouchability. All players who are good enough to represent their countries are placed on pedestals, and there are precious few who have reached that level without at least a touch of arrogance. In countries that have enjoyed continuity from one generation of players to the next, no pedestal is too tall to be upended if needs be, and there are invariably respected greybeards in the mix who are able to remind the current stars that they are no more than part of his board's authority.

"It is a matter of grave concern, however, that a confidential report with limited distribution to CSA officials should be leaked and sensationalised in this way," said chief executive Gerald Majola. Shouldn't Majola have "grave concern" for the players' seeming disregard for his board's authority?

After all, it wasn't that long ago that one South African player grew so powerful and so ungovernable that the consequences of his unbridled actions undermined cricket around the world. His name was Hansie Cronje.

But rather not discuss. Were Graeme Pollock to walk into a room filled with 16-year-old cricketers it's a fair bet they would think he was the granddad of one of their mates. Hylton Ackerman? He's a commentator, isn't he? Hang on; he's HD's old man. The fact that Ackerman was an outstanding genius of his generation of South African batsmen goes unspoken and therefore unheard.

Cricket South Africa's (CSA) reaction to the publication in the local edition of The Wisden Cricketer of a report by the national team's former fitness trainer, Adrian le Roux, who considered the players' alcohol consumption "a problem," aptly illustrates a community that has forgotten its place in wider society.

"It is a matter of grave concern, however, that a confidential report with limited distribution to CSA officials should be leaked and sensationalised in this way," said chief executive Gerald Majola. Shouldn't Majola have "grave concern" for the players' seeming disregard for his board's authority?

After all, it wasn't that long ago that one South African player grew so

powerful and so ungovernable that the consequences of his unbridled actions undermined cricket around the world. His name was Hansie Cronje.

Even England have had their share of

unfortunate incidents in recent years.

Mickey Arthur believes his players

are not among these malcontents and cites just two breaches of the team's alcohol rules since he took over as coach in 2005. Both times the issue

was dealt with internally, which

means no official disciplinary hearing was held and no recognised punishment was meted out.

But rather than wondering out loud whether Australia beat a hungover South African team in the Caribbean or whether the over-indulgence by some players after the

rather not discuss. Were Graeme Pollock to walk into a room filled with 16-year-old cricketers it's a fair bet they would think he was the granddad of one of their mates. Hylton Ackerman? He's a commentator, isn't he? Hang on; he's HD's old man. The fact that Ackerman was an outstanding genius of his generation of South African batsmen goes unspoken and therefore unheard.

"It is a matter of grave concern, however, that a confidential report with limited distribution to CSA officials should be leaked and sensationalised in this way," said chief executive Gerald Majola. Shouldn't Majola have "grave concern" for the players' seeming disregard for his board's authority?

After all, it wasn't that long ago that one South African player grew so

powerful and so ungovernable that the consequences of his unbridled actions undermined cricket around the world. His name was Hansie Cronje.

Even England have had their share of

unfortunate incidents in recent years.

Mickey Arthur believes his players

are not among these malcontents and cites just two breaches of the team's alcohol rules since he took over as coach in 2005. Both times the issue

was dealt with internally, which

means no official disciplinary hearing was held and no recognised punishment was meted out.

But rather than wondering out

loud whether Australia beat a hungover South African team in the Caribbean or whether the over-indulgence by some players after the

rather not discuss. Were Graeme Pollock to walk into a room filled with 16-year-old cricketers it's a fair bet they would think he was the granddad of one of their mates. Hylton Ackerman? He's a commentator, isn't he? Hang on; he's HD's old man. The fact that Ackerman was an outstanding genius of his generation of South African batsmen goes unspoken and therefore unheard.

"It is a matter of grave concern, however, that a confidential report with limited distribution to CSA officials should be leaked and sensationalised in this way," said chief executive Gerald Majola. Shouldn't Majola have "grave concern" for the players' seeming disregard for his board's authority?

After all, it wasn't that long ago that one South African player grew so

powerful and so ungovernable that the consequences of his unbridled actions undermined cricket around the world. His name was Hansie Cronje.

Even England have had their share of

unfortunate incidents in recent years.

Mickey Arthur believes his players

are not among these malcontents and cites just two breaches of the team's alcohol rules since he took over as coach in 2005. Both times the issue

was dealt with internally, which

means no official disciplinary hearing was held and no recognised punishment was meted out.

But rather than wondering out

loud whether Australia beat a hungover South African team in the Caribbean or whether the over-indulgence by some players after the

rather not discuss. Were Graeme Pollock to walk into a room filled with 16-year-old cricketers it's a fair bet they would think he was the granddad of one of their mates. Hylton Ackerman? He's a commentator, isn't he? Hang on; he's HD's old man. The fact that Ackerman was an outstanding genius of his generation of South African batsmen goes unspoken and therefore unheard.

"It is a matter of grave concern, however, that a confidential report with limited distribution to CSA officials should be leaked and sensationalised in this way," said chief executive Gerald Majola. Shouldn't Majola have "grave concern" for the players' seeming disregard for his board's authority?

After all, it wasn't that long ago that one South African player grew so

powerful and so ungovernable that the consequences of his unbridled actions undermined cricket around the world. His name was Hansie Cronje.

Even England have had their share of

unfortunate incidents in recent years.

Mickey Arthur believes his players

are not among these malcontents and cites just two breaches of the team's alcohol rules since he took over as coach in 2005. Both times the issue

was dealt with internally, which

means no official disciplinary hearing was held and no recognised punishment was meted out.

But rather than wondering out

loud whether Australia beat a hungover South African team in the Caribbean or whether the over-indulgence by some players after the

rather not discuss. Were Graeme Pollock to walk into a room filled with 16-year-old cricketers it's a fair bet they would think he was the granddad of one of their mates. Hylton Ackerman? He's a commentator, isn't he? Hang on; he's HD's old man. The fact that Ackerman was an outstanding genius of his generation of South African batsmen goes unspoken and therefore unheard.

"It is a matter of grave concern, however, that a confidential report with limited distribution to CSA officials should be leaked and sensationalised in this way," said chief executive Gerald Majola. Shouldn't Majola have "grave concern" for the players' seeming disregard for his board's authority?

After all, it wasn't that long ago that one South African player grew so

powerful and so ungovernable that the consequences of his unbridled actions undermined cricket around the world. His name was Hansie Cronje.

Even England have had their share of

unfortunate incidents in recent years.

Mickey Arthur believes his players

are not among these malcontents and cites just two breaches of the team's alcohol rules since he took over as coach in 2005. Both times the issue

was dealt with internally, which

means no official disciplinary hearing was held and no recognised punishment was meted out.

But rather than wondering out

loud whether Australia beat a hungover South African team in the Caribbean or whether the over-indulgence by some players