

No headway in coach search

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Although it has been ten days since the inception of the new cricket authority they have not yet embarked on what is the most important task-- the search for a new national team coach.

It is now uncertain whether the Bangladesh team will be able to prepare under a new coach for the demanding tour of New Zealand in December. And in that case the Tigers should depend on interim coach Shaun Williams, who is going to receive an extra amount of US \$ 2000 for the Twenty20 assignment.

The last committee had officially announced a short list of candidates for the future national coach and they taken the decision to start the process from the end of July by inviting Australian Jamie Siddons, John Harmer and Zimbabwean Dave Houghton for presenting their proposal.

But the ad-hoc committee in its first meeting on August 1 has decided to add more option in this regard but they are yet to set their 'course of action' about the most important appointment. The reality is that Bangladesh need a high quality coach in charge ahead of the most daunting task in New Zealand as the Tigers had desperately missed a high-profile coach like Dav Whatmore in the recently concluded forgettable tour of Sri Lanka.

"I feel that a new national coach is desperately required ahead of the New Zealand trip but I am not sure whether it would be possible or not. We are yet to start the process but I am hopeful that it will be initiated by

next week. Within a short time we will discuss the important issue in the working committee," said Gazi Ashraf Hossain Lipu, chairman of the cricket operations committee.

The former national skipper was also doubtful about whether it would be possible to add more names in the list within the short period of time.

"Let us start the job first than I can only say whether it would be possible for us to add more names in the list. But what I can say is that it is not so easy. And the most important thing is that even you can't give assurance about three names," he added.

Lipu was not ready to clear their intention about what kind of coach they would like to appoint for the national team but it was learnt that they are not in favour of a high-profile appointment like Dav Whatmore.

What they believe is that a mid-level coach would be better for a team like Bangladesh as they think that a high-profile coach quickly loses his motivation when things don't go his way.

And that is the reason they are thinking not to go searching for a high-profile coach, rather they are looking to settle a deal with Zimbabwean Dave Houghton.

But as regards their experience Bangladesh has seen that a mid-level coach like Shaun Williams, who has been working as the interim coach since Whatmore left the job, could be better for age levels or academy sides, not for the national team.

A national team coach deserves more qualities than only to solve individual player's problem.



THE OVAL IS HIS OYSTER: India leg-spinner Anil Kumble (C) celebrates taking the wicket of England captain Michael Vaughan with teammates Wasim Jaffer (L) and Rudra Pradap Singh on the third day of the third and final Test at The Oval yesterday. Kumble also scored his maiden Test ton (110 not out) here on Friday.

PHOTO: AFP

Army training for Tigers on

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Bangladesh national cricket team spent their first day in special training at the warfare wing of the Bangladesh Army's School of Infantry and Tactics (SI&T) at Jalalabad Cantonment yesterday.

Mohammad Ashrafu men's wearing army uniforms had some demonstrations in the morning. They had to climb a hundred foot mountain and run through tea garden during the first session and then they were oriented with the Tiger Chase Route while the players had their own jersey.

Lt. Col. Shikder is coordinating the whole course. "Players enjoyed the first day. The full fledged training will start from tomorrow," said newly appointed team operations manager Tanjib Ahsan Saad.

Come, see & help: Manna

SPORTS REPORTER

The metropolis club officials and members from the silver screen requested all the sports lovers to watch Friday's charity football match which is being arranged to raise funds for the flood victims.

A press conference was organised at the conference room of the National Sports Council yesterday in connection with the match where movie hero Manna made the appeal.

Archrivals Mohammedan and Abahani will first meet in a match and that will be followed by a game between the country's top footballers and the cine stars at the Bangabandhu National Stadium. Time of the matches will be announced later.

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England put in a spin

Cricket

AFP, London

Sachin Tendulkar took a wicket first ball to remove dangerman Kevin Pietersen as India maintained the pressure on England during the third and final Test at The Oval here Saturday.

England, at tea on the third day, were 210 for five -- 454 runs behind India's record 664 and still needing a further 255 to avoid the follow-on.

Pietersen was out shortly before tea for 41 when, trying to drive Tendulkar, he got an edge to a sharply turning leg-break and was caught at first slip by Rahul Dravid.

The elated India captain, who'd brought master batsman Tendulkar on after his frontline bowlers failed to break a fifth-wicket stand worth 78, celebrated in unusually exuberant style.

Paul Collingwood was 34 not out and Ian Bell two not out after it had seemed England, who started the session on 124 for four, would get through to tea without losing a wicket.

The normally aggressive Pietersen spent 23 balls on 21 in the face of some disciplined India bowling.

But he really found his touch when he whipped a length ball from medium-pace Sourav Ganguly from outside off-stump through mid-on for four in trademark fashion before falling to Tendulkar.

Earlier, Anil Kumble continued to be a thorn in England's side.

The 36-year-old leg-spinner whose 110 not out on Friday was his maiden Test century and the first by an India batsman this series, removed Alastair Cook and England captain Michael Vaughan.

Cook, who'd been twice dropped off legside shots, ultimately saw one of his strengths become a weakness when he fell for 61.

The left-handed opener trying to turn Kumble to the on-side, got a leading edge and was caught by Rudra Pratap Singh, running round from mid-off. Cook, 22, faced 98 balls with 11 fours.

Kumble, in his 118th Test, then moved into joint third place on 563 wickets with retired Australia quick Glenn McGrath in the list of Test cricket's most successful bowlers when he caught and bowled Vaughan for 11 following the batsman's chipped drive off the last ball before lunch.

India, 1-0 up, had simply to avoid defeat in this match to win only their third Test series in England in 15 tours dating back to 1932.

England, who needed to win this match to preserve their six-year unbeaten run in home Test series, started the third day on 24 for none.

Cook had only added one to his overnight 12 when leg-slip Dinesh Karthik failed to hold his glance off fast bowler Shanthakumaran Sreesanth with England 30 for one.

The Essex batsman had moved on to 28 when another leg-gance, off Kumble, was dropped by leg-slip Ganguly.

Nightwatchman James Anderson, who'd hung around

gamely for over an hour while adding 66 for the second wicket with Cook, was eventually out for 16 when left-arm quick Singh had him plumb lbw on the backfoot.

India's total was their highest Test innings score against England, surpassing the 628 for eight declared they made at Headingley in 2002.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at tea on the third day of the third and final Test between England and India at The Oval on Saturday:

INDIA: First innings 664 (Kumble 110 no, Dhoni 92, Karthik 91, Tendulkar 82, Dravid 55, Laxman 51; Anderson 4-182)

ENGLAND: First innings (overnight 24-1) Strauss c Sreesanth b Zaheer Khan 6

Cook c Singh b Kumble 61 Anderson lbw b RP Singh 16 Vaughan c and b Kumble 11 Pietersen c Dravid b Tendulkar 41 Collingwood not out 34 Bell not out 2

Extras: (b-16, lb-9, w-9, nb-5) 39 Total: (For 5 wks in 62 overs) 210 Fall of wickets: 1-12, 2-78, 3-119, 4-124, 5-202.

To bat: Prior, Tremlett, Sidebottom, Panesar.

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Zaheer Khan	16	10	22	1
Sreesanth	14	0	55	0
Kumble	16	4	51	2
RP Singh	11	1	50	1
Ganguly	4	1	6	0
Tendulkar	1	0	1	1

Toss: India

Proteas without Kallis

BBC ONLINE, undated

Hosts South Africa left all-rounder Jacques Kallis out of their 15-man squad for September's World Twenty20.

The Proteas' leading scorer in Tests and ODIs, has been criticised in the past for slow scoring in one-dayers.

Other all-rounders Shaun Pollock, Johan van der Wath, Albie Morkel, Justin Kemp and young prospect Vernon Philander have been included in the line-up.

Top-order batsman Gulam Bodi, 28, who moved from India to South Africa in his teens, is the only uncapped player.

"The squad provides options in all departments," chief selector Joubert Strydom said. "There is a good blend of experience and youth in the squad."

SQUAD

Graeme Smith (captain), Gulam Bodi, Loots Bosman, Mark Boucher, AB de Villiers, JP Duminy, Herschelle Gibbs, Justin Kemp, Albie Morkel, Morne Morkel, Makhaya Ntini, Vernon Philander, Shaun Pollock, Thandi Tshabalala, Johan van der Wath.

Ashraf justifies Akhtar penalty

CRICINFO, undated

Nasim Ashraf, the chairman of the Pakistan Cricket Board, defended the board's decision to fine Shoaib Akhtar after he left the training camp in Karachi without permission.

"No matter who the individual is he will not be given special treatment if he violates regulations and misconducts," said Ashraf. Shoaib had left the camp early citing a stiff neck, but did not inform Talat Ali, the team manager.

Ashraf indicated the players won't be spared for misconduct and discipline. "We have now as a policy decided not to be lax where discipline and players conduct is concerned. No compromises would be made where team discipline is concerned." Shoaib was fined approximately 5000 dollars and docked penalty points from the discipline category of his central contract with the board for leaving the camp without permission and not turning up at a subsequent hearing.

Dawn, the Karachi-based daily, reported that Shoaib went to Gaddafi Stadium to speak to the administration about the fine, apparently unhappy that he had received a letter from the board about the hearing on Friday, two days after the imposition of the fine.

Though the report claims Shoaib to have been visibly upset

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And it's Anil who did it

Cricket

AFP, London

Anil Kumble took matters into his own hands just days after telling his India top order colleagues they needed to score a hundred this series by compiling a maiden Test hundred that all but sealed a series win against England.

Kumble's 110 not out was the centrepiece of India's 664, their highest Test innings total against England, at The Oval here Friday.

England, at stumps on the second day of the third and final Test, were 24 for one still needing a further 441 runs just to avoid the follow-on.

All 11 India batsmen made it into double figures but, in a line-up featuring the likes of Sachin Tendulkar, Rahul Dravid, Sourav Ganguly and VVS Laxman, it was Kumble -- appearing in his 118th Test -- who became the first India player this series to reach three figures.

"We had a team meeting a couple of days back and I just mentioned it's about time our batters scored a hundred in the series and I never thought I would have to do it,"

Kumble said.

The 36-year-old leg-spinner, who needs just three more wickets to move past Australia's Glenn McGrath into third place in the list of Test cricket's most successful bowlers, added: "I jokingly again mentioned that at tea-time when I was on 60 not out saying maybe it's my time to go out there and get a hundred."

"I always believed it was possible but I never thought I would have to wait 118 Test matches."

There were eight partnerships of fifty or more in the innings with wicketkeeper Mahendra Dhoni, who made a rapid 92 off just 81 balls, and Kumble putting on 91.

Such was India's dominance on a placid pitch, that Kumble and last man Shanthakumaran Sreesanth added 73 -- a 10th wicket record for either side in an England-India Test.

Kumble, whose side went 1-0 up in the series with a seven-wicket win in Nottingham after holding out for a draw with one wicket standing during the first Test at Lord's, was 24 runs short of his century when Sreesanth came out to bat.

"Sree kept saying 'you deserve a hundred and I'll hang around'," Kumble explained.

Kumble, with Tendulkar having

made 82 earlier in the innings, reached his hundred when a bottom edged cut off part-time spinner Kevin Pietersen went through the legs of England wicket-keeper Matt Prior.

"You always get four runs when you score there," joked Kumble, whose wait of 118 Test matches for his first hundred at this level was a record.

"I have achieved what everyone dreams of when you start playing. Throughout my career I've put a price on my wicket. I know as a bowler how difficult it is to get a wicket."

The elated reaction of India's players in the dressing room said much about their respect for Kumble.

"You can make out from his expression when he got his hundred, that you don't see Anil celebrating like that most of the time," said wicketkeeper Dhoni.

"It was amazing, a remarkable moment. I am happy I got 92. It was needed from the team's point of view."

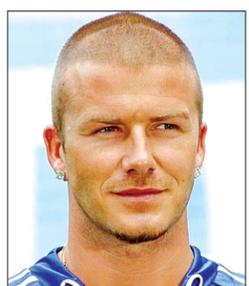
Three England bowlers conceded more than 100 runs each and

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Did U Know?

The javelin event appeared for the first time at the London Olympic Games in 1908.



David Beckham

(LA Galaxy's superstar English footballer) "It was a good night, but it was also a bad night." After his side lost his debut match in the Major League

Razaq could be in trouble

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

The Pakistan Cricket Board has taken note of scathing comments made by Abdul Razaq on a TV show recently, though it stopped short of saying whether any disciplinary action would be taken against him.

Razaq told Geo TV, soon after he was dropped from Pakistan's Twenty20 squad for the World Championship, his omission was "illogical" and threatened to make himself unavailable for Pakistan.

"If this is the way I am going to be treated after serving the country honestly and diligently," Razaq said, "I should be the one now to decide when to make myself available for national selection."

Razaq, who has taken 246 wickets and scored 4465 runs in ODIs, said he felt most hurt because no one from the board or selection committee called him to explain the decision.

"I don't know what the logic

was. I am a senior player and deserve a phone call. When I was injured no one in the board bothered to call me up and find out how I was doing."

Razaq was one of seven Pakistani players to be approached by the Indian Cricket League (ICL). "I need to know what they have in mind but I am considering the ICL offer."

Shafiqat Naghmi, the PCB's chief operating officer, told Cricinfo that some comments did constitute a breach of the code of conduct. "Criticising board policy is definitely a breach and we have taken note of the interview but have not yet decided whether to take any action."

"He has the freedom to say what he feels and certainly we understand he must have been disappointed. We are aware of it but are currently undecided over any future action to take."

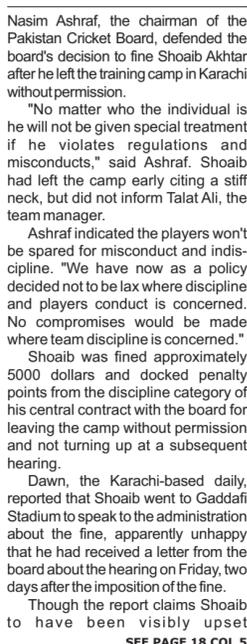
Naghmi confirmed that Razaq has now received his central contract though he hasn't indicated whether he will sign it. Until Friday, Razaq was the only player

among the 20 handed central contracts who had not been in touch with the board at all, heightening speculation that he may opt instead for the ICL.

A board official told Cricinfo, "We have got in touch with him now and he has confirmed receiving the contract. He has intimated, once his lawyer goes through it, that he will sign it." According to the official the delay was the result of a recent change in address.

The original deadline for signing the contract was August 10 but was extended by five days to accommodate other players yet to sign, including Mohammad Yousuf, Danish Kaneria and Younis Khan.

Kaneria and Younis are in England and sought extra time because of a delay in receiving their contracts. Both, however, are said to have accepted the terms and agreements in principle. Yousuf said he'd been out of Lahore and saw the contract on August 9, so needed a few days before signing it.



Tennis

AFP, Los Angeles

Russia's Maria Sharapova led the top four seeds into the semi-finals of the 600,000-dollar WTA hard court tournament here Friday, sweeping aside defending champion Elena Dementieva.

Despite some struggles with her serve, the No. 1 seed defeated Dementieva 6-3, 6-4 to set up a clash with another compatriot, fourth-seeded Nadia Petrova, a 6-7 (3/7), 6-4, 6-1 winner over Virginie Razzano of France.

After Dementieva gave away the first set with two double faults on the last two points, Sharapova raced to a 4-1 lead in the second.

She had a break point in the sixth game but failed to convert and Dementieva battled back to knot the set at 4-4.

"Four-four is never easy, especially when you're up 4-1 and you have a break point," said Sharapova, who finally captured the match on her third match point. "The good thing about the end was that I didn't get frustrated. I just kept going. She definitely raised her level."

Second-seeded Jelena Jankovic and No. 3 Ana Ivanovic set up an all-Serbian semi-final.

Jankovic, runner-up to Dementieva here last year,

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What to WATCH

ESPN

English Premier League
Chelsea v Birmingham City
Live from 6:25 pm

Man United v Reading
Live from 8:55 pm

STAR Sports

English Premier League
Arsenal v Fulham
Live from 4:55 pm

Ryan's injury not serious

AFP, London

A scan on England bowler Ryan Sidebottom's injured left side revealed "no significant damage" according to an England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) statement issued Saturday.

Nottinghamshire left-arm quick Sidebottom didn't bowl after lunch on the second day of the third and final Test against India

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