

Dilshan dropped from Tests

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lankan selectors Friday dropped seasoned middle-order batsman Tillekeratne Dilshan from their 16-man squad for the two-Test tour of Australia starting later this month.

Thilan Samaraweera replaced the 30-year-old, who has been struggling with his Test form in the last two years.

Dilshan, has however been kept on standby and named skipper for the A team which will tour Zimbabwe beginning October 15.

The selectors also picked 26-year-old uncapped left-arm seamer Chanaka Welegedera and leg-spinner Malinga Bandara after he was overlooked for the ongoing one-day series against England.

Veteran Sanath Jayasuriya retained his opening berth after former skipper Marvan Atapattu opted out.

Selectors had asked Atapattu to consider a return to the side last week but Atapattu declined the offer.

ACE spinner Muttiah Muralidaran, nursing a bicep injury and needing just eight wickets to level Shane Warne's world record of 708 wickets, has been named in the squad.

The first Test will be played in Brisbane from November 8 while the second will be held at Hobart (Nov 16-20).

FIA clears Hamilton

AFP, Shanghai

World Championship leader Lewis Hamilton will not be punished for erratic driving behind the safety car in the Japanese Grand Prix last week, the FIA confirmed on Friday.

Formula One race stewards conducted an enquiry into Hamilton's driving in Fuji and cleared him of improper conduct.

Despite protesting his innocence, Hamilton, who is currently 12 points clear in the standings, had feared that he would be penalised and his title chances would be affected.

But the 22-year-old British rookie has now been cleared of any wrongdoing and can concentrate on Sunday's Chinese Grand Prix where he could seal the driver's championship with a win.

Geoff faces angry

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In assessing that Pakistan fought back well enough, though firmly behind the eight-ball as they were, it was futile. Not having played first-class cricket since January didn't help (though it didn't hurt South Africa) and switching from Twenty20 took some time, but Lawson wasn't using them as excuses.

"We showed some ticker, some heart," he argued. "The lower-order batted well in that first innings. We showed we're not going to fold and are tough to beat. The rub of the green didn't go our way distinctly our way. If we had a bit of luck here we could've done well. We're not very far from where we need to be. Two dropped catches might have cost us the Test."

"There are a lot of positives to take. (Abdur) Rehman took eight wickets, (Danish) Kaneria bowled well, Misbah-ul-Haq batted well. Coming off Twenty20, we showed we're fit enough to play Tests. We fought back after being behind on day one and showed a lot of courage. We were still in this game with a little chance till the first over after lunch. That's because we showed a lot of courage and fortitude which is a very good sign for Pakistan."

As a batsman Malik showed both a stogy but futile 30 followed a gritty 73 in the first innings. It's difficult to judge his leadership from just five days, but Lawson saw some good things. "He's a young captain and he's learning. He did some really good things out there and he did some things we will discuss. He's a young man finding his way in a country that expects a lot from his leader. With the bat, he batted like a leader."

Lawson will hope the good signs convert into good performances. There is only a three-day break before the second and final Test begins in Lahore and some tricky selection issues to work with. The Test has been officially dubbed the 'Inzamam Test', it being the former captain's final international match. Mohammad Yousuf is also likely to play, but could the focus, as Graeme Smith questioned, on Inzamam be a distraction?

Lawson paused before answering, optimistically again. "It's a fascinating selection. Yousuf is training very hard at the moment. David Dwyer has given him a really good workout and he has come a long way in the space of a week."

"It will be hard to handle that (the Inzamam send-off). Inzy deserves a great farewell, because he's been a great player. But we have worked hard over the last few weeks and we will do what we have to do to win the game. The game is not a testimonial and we're going to try and win it. I hope Inzy scores two hundreds."

If that happens and Pakistan do win, Lawson may find Lahore a more welcoming venue than Karachi.



National football coach Syed Nayeemuddin (C) briefs his players during half-time of their warmup match against Dhaka XI at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Paul's eyes on series

BBC ONLINE, undated

Skipper Paul Collingwood was thrilled by England's first one-day win in Sri Lanka since 1982 but said it would count for little if they do not build on it.

Owais Shah's 82 proved the difference between the sides as England claimed a 65-run day-night victory in Dambulla.

"There's no point coming out here and only winning one game. We want to win a series," said Collingwood.

"This set the benchmark, the standards we want to keep for the rest of the series and go even higher if possible."

Despite slumping to 61-4 after choosing to bat first, England rallied to 234-8, before bowling out the home side for 169.

It was only the second time England have won a one-day match in Sri Lanka, with the previous win being under the captaincy of Ian Botham in 1982.

But although he was keen to revel in an impressive win, Collingwood said there was no room for complacency.

"I know Sri Lanka will bounce back hard and we have to be better every time we go onto the pitch," he said.

"This was exceptional, we've put

in a special performance and there was a lot of hard work put in the nets and talking about the game and where we could improve. To take it onto the field so quickly is a special thing."

Shah's knock of 82 ended up having a big say in the outcome. It showed a different side to his game than his 107 not out of 95 balls against India at The Oval, and Collingwood was impressed with what he saw from the Middlesex player.

"He was very patient and managed to find the areas that he could score in," said Collingwood. "To get that kind of total, we knew if we took early wickets we could put them under pressure and that's what we did."

Shah shared vital partnerships of 78 and 70 with Collingwood (42) and Graeme Swann (34) after England had slumped to 61-4. And their eventual total of 234-8 proved more than good enough as Sri Lanka struggled to come to terms with batting under the lights.

Collingwood was delighted by the all-round improvement shown by his team after their 119-run defeat in Monday's series opener.

"Obviously we were disappointed with the first game when we got comprehensively beaten. "This time the boys showed a lot of character, bounced back really well and set the standard. In all

dimensions of the game -- batting, bowling and fielding -- they were fantastic. We really set a benchmark here."

Man-of-the-match Shah cited the chance of a regular place in the side as an important factor in his recent successes for England, although his position at six in the order is a new one.

"I'm aware of the role that's required, it's just obviously (just a matter of) delivering."

"I've played a fair bit of cricket for Middlesex and although I bat at three, I do bat right through the innings, so it's just a matter of coming in in the middle order and just trying to see it through and have a bit of a go at the end," Shah said.

"To me it's all about keeping it simple -- touch wood at the moment, things are going really well, I'm hitting the ball in good areas, which is what I want to do."

Spinner Swann, who followed his 34 with 2-27 from his 10 overs, added: "Ryan (Sidebottom) and Jimmy (Anderson) bowled superbly from the start, and the wickets they took made it a lot easier for us later on."

"In the first game, we saw how patient Sri Lanka were with the bat. When we were in a bit of trouble, that's what we remembered."

"Owais and Colly got us back in the game, and when I came in, Owais was seeing it so well that he just told me to keep getting the bat on ball."

Div 3 football

SPORTS REPORTER

Gazirchot beat PWD 3-0 in a super league match of the Third Division Football League at the Bir Shreshtha Sepoy Mohammad Mostafa Stadium in Kamalapur yesterday.

Sanwar put Gazirchot ahead in the 14th minute before Pashban doubled the margin in the 26th minute. Faruq netted the final goal in the 35th minute.

The day's other super league match between Gulistan Club and The Muslim Institute ended in a goalless draw.

Steyn seals

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SOUTH AFRICA: First innings 450 (Kallis 155, De Villiers 77, Amla 71, Gibbs 54; Rehman 4-105)

PAKISTAN: First innings 291 (Malik 73; Harris 5-73)

SOUTH AFRICA: Second innings 264-7 decl (Kallis 100 n.o., Rehman 4-105)

PAKISTAN: Second innings (over-night 146-3)

Hafeez b Steyn 1
Butt c Amla b Steyn 3
Younis Khan b Steyn 126
Iqbal c Kallis b Harris 44
Asif c Amla b Nel 6
Misbahul b Nel 23
Malik c Nel b Ntini 30
Akmal c Boucher b Harris 9
Rehman lbw b Steyn 0
Gul c Nel b Steyn 8
Kaneria not out 0
Extras: (b-8, lb-4, nb-1) 13
Total: (All out in 84.5 overs) 263
Fall of wickets: 1-1, 2-20, 3-134, 4-161, 5-197, 6-230, 7-239, 8-249, 9-257.

Bowler O M R W
Ntini 12.5 4 34 1
Steyn 15 3 56 5
Nel 19 5 59 2
Harris 30 8 58 2
Smith 3 0 33 0
Kallis 4 3 4 0
Amla 1 0 7 0
Result: South Africa won by 160 runs.

Man-of-the-match: Jacques Kallis.
Umpires: Mark Benson (ENG) and Simon Taufel (AUS)

TV umpire: Riazuddin
Match referee: Alan Hurst (AUS)

Dhaka hold

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If the decision to include these mediocre players -- who will probably grace the bench only -- backfires, not only Nayeem but also the so-called selection panel of the Bangladesh Football Federation will have to shoulder the responsibility of a catastrophe.

Nayeem, however, repeated his urge to play more warm-up matches before a competitive game.

"You could see the team's fitness level is impressive. They also looked better in the second half," said Nayeem whose side got less than half an hour to get ready for yesterday's match after traveling straight from their camp at BKSP.

"We cannot even play warm-up matches at home but India, our main rival of the SAFF Championship, are now training in Dubai. So, we have to remain satisfied with whatever the players can give," he added.

STARTING LINE-UPS

NATIONAL TEAM: Biplab, Hassan, Al Mamun, Nazrul, Rajani, Waly, Arif, Arman Aziz, Abul, Zahid, Emily and Moni.

DHAKA XI: Al Amin, Rasel, Ramjan, Akram, Rajib, Faisal, Khokon, Camara, Abdullah Parvez, Tapu and Domenic.

Man-of-the-match: Andrew Symonds.
Toss: Australia
Umpires: Steve Bucknor (WIS), Suresh Shastri (IND)
Third Umpire: G. Pratapkumar (IND)
Match Referee: Chris Broad (ENG)
Fourth one-day: At Chandigarh on Monday.

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supplement laboratory, as the source of the designer steroid THG, which was known by the lab as "the clear."

Jones' former partner Tim Montgomery, with whom she has a son, was banished and his world 100m record run erased based on evidence collected in the BALCO probe.

Jones herself had steadfastly denied ever using performance-enhancing drugs, even as the BALCO-spawned suspicions swirled around her.

She sued BALCO founder Victor Conte - who was convicted of steroid peddling - for defamation over his accusations on US television that she was a drugs cheat, later settling out of court.

She struggled through doping accusations at the 2004 Olympic trials and flopped in Athens.

In 2005 Jones was snubbed by European meet directors, and a package of highlights at the opening ceremony for the athletics World Championships in Helsinki failed to include any of the four-time World Champion.

According to the Post, Jones says in her letter that her former coach Trevor Graham gave her the banned drug, telling her it was flaxseed oil.

"Red flags should have been raised when he told me not to tell

Kartik shocked at recall

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

He's not sure whether this his 12th or 13th comeback to the Indian team, but for the moment Murali Kartik does not really care. He's more than happy to be giving up the dark blue blazer and microphone, accessories he's needed as a television analyst commenting on the India-Australia series. There's sure to be more chat, but Kartik can now tell the Australians all he wants at their faces when he reaches Chandigarh for the fourth ODI.

"It was a massive surprise," Kartik told Cricinfo soon after hearing the news of his recall. "After finishing my stint with Middlesex I knew that there was a break between two seasons and since I wasn't picked in the Irani Trophy squad I didn't have any cricket till the start of the Ranji season. That's why I took up the chance to work in the media. But yes, this is a very pleasant surprise."

But it's surprising only because Kartik has been ignored in the past even after doing well in domestic cricket. When he went out of the Indian team in early 2006, through a shoulder injury that required surgery, the doors seemed to gradually shut on him. A good stint with Lancashire and promising performances in the Challenger Series and in the Deodhar Trophy did not result in a recall, something that normally happens when a player misses out due to injury rather than lack of performances.

This time around, there was no denying him. A county season where he picked up 51 wickets in 11 matches at an average of 24 -- bowling Middlesex to victory almost single-handedly in four matches -- left Kartik seventh in the bowling charts. On top of this he had 20 wickets from 13 limited-overs matches and 9 from four Twenty20 games.

He did so well that Middlesex retained him as the overseas pro for the coming season, choosing him over Chaminda Vaas. "He is a world-class bowler who has fitted in well with the team," said John Emburey, the Middlesex coach. "With the regulations reducing the number of overseas players to one per county next year, it is crucial to sign a proven match-winner and we have done that with Kartik."

But for now Kartik is thinking of India, not Middlesex. "The two are

different things. I am going back to Middlesex anyway," he said. "Playing for the country is what you play for and strive for. That's what you want to do till the time you hang up your boots. As and when you get it, grasp it with both hands."

While no player will look down on a chance to make a comeback to national honours, few would willingly choose to do so against Australia, who are already 2-0 up in the seven-match series with one game rained out. A batting side that attacked spinners less robustly might have been preferable. "That's the way they've always played and there is a challenge there. International sport is always about challenge," said Kartik. "You just have to enjoy it. For me it's a question of going out there and enjoying my cricket and the challenges that come with it. I'm not going to put too much pressure on myself."

Besides just attacking with bat and ball, the Australians come pretty hard at opposition with the verbals. But Kartik, who's built up a reputation as a pretty fiery character, doesn't think that will be a big factor. "I've mellowed with age. That white-line fever is always there but I know how to channelise it better now," he said. "Against Australia it's always going to be there. Harbhajan has had a few exchanges with them in the past, he relishes that and it fires him up. Sreesanth has been treading a thin line... It's going to be interesting."

Kartik also doesn't think it's going to be difficult to slip back into the Indian team. "I'm no stranger to comebacks. I've been in and out of the team since 2000 and this was probably my longest stint out of the team. I'm going back into the dressing-room after a while," he said, but hoped that the things he had learnt playing cricket day-in and day-out would help him cement a place. "I've been playing back-to-back seasons for three years. It is hard work. In England you play 104 overs a day and then you travel 150-200 miles to the next venue to play your next game. The rigour teaches you a lot of things. The conditions are different, the weather is different. London is supposed to be sunny but it was wet, wet, wet all season. It teaches you to continuously adapt every day."

Another mild oddity is that despite having played only eight Tests and 30 ODIs over eight years, Kartik is the elder statesman in this spin-bowling set-up. Harbhajan, a good four years younger than Kartik,

has achieved much more but is himself making a comeback. "There comes a time in life when, if you've played a lot of cricket, you become one of the elder statesmen in the team. You can't run away from it. Experience teaches you a lot of things and you become more mature in handling success and failure."

The Indian team have only met with failure in the series so far, and the going won't be easy for Kartik, but he's hoping that his experience will make things easier. "Spin bowling is a lot about feel. Experience does make a big difference. One thing that I've had in my favour is that I've always understood my bowling and what I'm capable of. Half the time I feel the bowlers I'm competing with for places in the Indian team are better than me, so that keeps me level-headed." The way Matthew Hayden and Andrew Symonds are going after India's bowlers it might not be that easy to keep a level head when Kartik gets a bowl. How he handles it could make the difference.

SQUAD

Mahendra Singh Dhoni (capt), Sachin Tendulkar, Gautam Gambhir, Robin Uthappa, Sourav Ganguly, Rahul Dravid, Yuvraj Singh, Rohit Sharma, Dinesh Karthik, Irfan Pathan, Harbhajan Singh, Murali Kartik, Shanthakumaran Sreesanth, Rudra Pratap Singh, Zaheer Khan.

Mahela rues

FROM PAGE 17

But Owais Shah (82) worked the ball around superbly in adding 78 with skipper Paul Collingwood and 70 with Graeme Swann to revive the tourists.

The next match takes place in Dambulla on Sunday and Jayawardene is looking for a marked improvement.

"We came out strongly after losing the toss and took early wickets but the way Paul and Owais batted in the middle period consolidated their innings and then there was another partnership with Swann which kept it going for them," he said.

"I thought our ground fielding was one of the things which even after the first game wasn't up to the mark."

"We need to make sure we work hard and come back strong for the next one."



Dipu (L), Bangladesh's gold medalist at the Special Olympics in Shanghai, and silver medalist Masud show v-signs at the Shanghai Pudong Natatorium yesterday.

Marion admits doping

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anyone" Jones wrote. Ironically, it was later learned that Graham was the anonymous tipster who sent a sample of "the clear" to anti-doping officials, who had it analyzed and discovered the previously unknown and undetectable THG.

Jones said that when federal investigators asked her if she had used "the clear" and shown her a sample of it, she panicked and said she hadn't, even though she recognized the product, the Post reported.

The maximum penalty for lying to a federal agent is five years in jail and a 250,000-dollar fine. The Post said Jones told friends she expected a sentence of up to six months, and the Daily News said Jones is not expected to serve more than a few months and could escape jail altogether.

The Post said Jones would also plead guilty to lying in an unrelated case involving a 25,000-dollar check given to her by Montgomery - who pleaded guilty in New York this year in a bank fraud scheme in which he received commissions for cashing worthless checks.

Jones was linked to doping again in 2006, when an A sample from a urine test during the US athletics trials showed signs of the blood booster erythropoietin. The backup sample was negative.

Jones, who now lives in Austin,

Texas, and recently married sprinter Obadele Thompson, said in documents filed in court this year that she was broke.

In a breach of contract lawsuit against coach Dan Pfaff, Jones, who once commanded millions in endorsements, has "total liquid assets throughout the world" of

agreement regarding Marion Jones, we continue our long-stated support for the efforts of the US Anti-Doping Agency and the federal government in their investigations.

"Any use of performance-enhancing substances is a tragedy for the athlete, their teammates, friends, family and the sport. We await any further developments on this matter."

Robert Weiner, a former US government National Drug Policy spokesman, said Thursday that the disgraced sprinter should give back her medals and her backers should be prosecuted.

"Marion Jones should give back her five 2000 Olympic medals or the Olympics should force her to return them," said Weiner, who help co-ordinate White House drug policy for the Sydney Olympics and assisted in creating the World Anti-doping Agency. "Jones' guilt admission shows that not everything is a victory, especially when people control their own lives."

"But we have made huge progress given the fact that under the various forms of pressure Jones has to admit guilt."

"Everyone who assisted and supported her drug use, including her coach, should also be prosecuted. The Jones guilty plea and likely jail sentence should be a message to all other sports stars."



MARION JONES

about 2,000 dollars.

USA Track and Field chief Craig Masback said he had no knowledge of any doping admission by Jones.

"Anything that exposes the truth about drug use in sport is good for ensuring the integrity of sport," Masback said in a statement. "While USAATF has no knowledge of any letter or pending plea