

SA stick to same side

AFP, Port Elizabeth

South Africa will go into the first two Tests of a three-match series against the West Indies with the same squad that won successive series against Pakistan and New Zealand.

The selectors again included veteran all-rounder Shaun Pollock in a 12-man squad, although he has not made the final 11 which has played in four successive Tests while South Africa have been on a winning streak.

The first Test will be in Durban from December 26 to 30 and the second Test in Cape Town from January 2 to 6.

Coach Mickey Arthur, who announced the squad Sunday, said he was confident captain Graeme Smith would have recovered fully from a virus which caused him to miss Sunday's Twenty20 international against the West Indies in Port Elizabeth.

Arthur said fast bowler Morne Morkel, who is recovering from a foot stress fracture, would join the squad for the first two Tests but would not be considered for selection.

SQUAD

Graeme Smith (captain), Ashwell Prince (vice-captain), Herschelle Gibbs, Hashim Amla, Jacques Kallis, AB de Villiers, Mark Boucher, Shaun Pollock, Andre Nel, Paul Harris, Dale Steyn, Makhaya Ntini.

Subhashis ensures

FROM PAGE 17 Subhashis's magic spell of 10-4-24-5 saw Sri Lanka -- who lost three wickets on the same score of 87 -- slip to 95-6 and never recover. Subhashis, who also hit the inroads, was adjudged man-of-the-match.

The fifth and final match will be played tomorrow at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur.

The teams of the sub-continent are preparing for the ICC U-19 Cricket World Cup to be held in Malaysia next February.

SCORES IN BRIEF

BD U-19s: 167 all out in 48 overs (Mintu 4, Nasir 46, Marhsall 42, Fernando 1-34, Peiris 1-18, Pathirana 1-38, Rajapaksa 1-24). SL U-19s: 118 all out in 36.5 overs (Dilshan 40, Dinesh 25, Janith 17, Dollar 1-34, Subhashis 5-24, Shuva 1-24, Nasir 1-14).

Weather could

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Swann was also included in a short-list of 12 announced on Monday, giving the tourists the option of a second slow bowler alongside Monty Panesar in a must-win game for Michael Vaughan's men.

England will drop three places -- from number two behind champions Australia to five -- in the official rankings if they lose the match and with it the series.

A 2-0 series win for Sri Lanka will see Mahela Jayawardene's men leapfrog three places past England, South Africa and India, to number two.

India go down

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but could manage just one half-century in six innings.

India gambled with hard-hitting opener Virender Sehwag who was recalled more because of his past performances in Australia, where he has averaged 54.70 in five Tests, than on current form.

Sehwag played his last Test in South Africa in January before being axed for Test series against Bangladesh, England and Pakistan.

India will rely on their spin twins -- leg-spinner Kumble and off-spinner Harbhajan Singh -- to test a formidable Australian batting lineup as they do not have the pace attack to match their rivals.

They have named five fast bowlers in a 16-man squad, with Zaheer Khan being the most experienced with 52 Tests. Irfan Pathan, Rudra Pratap Singh, Ishant Sharma and Pankaj Singh have a combined tally of 35 matches.

India will then play a triangular one-day series in Australia, which will also feature World Cup runners-up Sri Lanka.

SQUAD

Anil Kumble (captain), Mahendra Singh Dhoni, Sachin Tendulkar, Rahul Dravid, Venkatesh Laxman, Yuvraj Singh, Sourav Ganguly, Harbhajan Singh, Zaheer Khan, Rudra Pratap Singh, Ishant Sharma, Irfan Pathan, Wasim Jaffer, Virender Sehwag, Dinesh Karthik, Pankaj Singh.

Capello

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Champions League trophy.

His first match in charge will be a February 6 friendly against Switzerland at Wembley. England's next competitive match won't be until September when they begin their qualifying campaign for the 2010 World Cup in South Africa.

England have won just one major international tournament, the 1966 World Cup when they beat West Germany 4-2 in the final at Wembley.



Chittagong players start to celebrate their victory after the fall of last Rajshahi wicket on the final day of their Ispahani Mirzapore Tea Ninth National Cricket League four-day match at the Rajshahi Divisional Stadium yesterday.

Taylor kills off SA early

Cricket

AFP, Port Elizabeth

Fast bowler Jerome Taylor took three wickets in his first over as the West Indies beat South Africa by five wickets in a rain-shortened Twenty20 international at St George's Park on Sunday.

South Africa could make only 58 for eight in their 13 overs after being sent in to bat, but the West Indies had to survive a ferocious onslaught by in-form fast bowler Dale Steyn before sealing victory with 19 balls to spare.

Steyn took four for nine in his three overs to strike a warning to the tourists ahead of a three-Test series which starts at the same ground on December 26.

South Africa were effectively put out of the contest when they slumped to 12 for six and then 22 for seven against lively fast bowling and good fielding in seam-friendly conditions.

Johan Botha, batting at number nine, top-scored with 28 not out to give the innings some respectability.

He was the only batsman to reach double figures. His two sixes and two fours were the only boundaries of the innings. Extras made the net biggest contribution with 13.

Taylor took three for six in his three overs, the maximum allowed in the shortened game.

South Africa captain Shaun Pollock said the early collapse put his team on the back foot.

"But we got something of a total and then we made a real game of it. It should be a good battle of the fast

bowlers in the Test series," said the veteran.

West Indies skipper Dwayne Bravo said: "It was a fantastic team effort. What made it so special was the way we fielded."

South Africa scored five runs in the first over -- four of them from leg byes -- but then lost four wickets in seven balls without adding another run.

Taylor struck with his first two deliveries, trapping Morne van Wyk leg before with a slower ball and then bowling JP Duminy with a fast, straight ball.

With the last delivery of the over AB de Villiers was bowled when the ball rebounded off his defensive stroke.

Herschelle Gibbs was caught by a diving Shivnarine Chanderpaul at mid-on off the first ball of Daren Powell's next over. Two run-outs, including a superb direct-hit effort by captain Dwayne Bravo, plunged South Africa into an almost hopeless situation.

Brenton Parchment hit the first ball of the West Indian innings from Shaun Pollock for four and then charged down the pitch to hit the fourth ball for a huge six over long-on. He was caught at cover off the last delivery of the over.

The West Indies were 29 for one after three overs before Steyn came into the attack and rocked the West Indians.

All four of his victims were bowled by yorkers, one of them a slower delivery which deceived Marlon Samuels. The other three beat the batsmen with express pace.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of the Twenty20 international between the West Indies and South Africa at St George's Park

on Sunday (match reduced to 13 overs a side because of rain):

SOUTH AFRICA				
Van Wyk lbw b Taylor	1			
Gibbs c Chanderpaul b Powell	0			
Duminy b Taylor	0			
de Villiers b Taylor	0			
Bodi b Sammy	8			
Pollock run out (Morton)	2			
Botha not out	1			
Steyn not out	1			
Extras: (lb-7, nb-1, w-5)	13			
Total: (For 8 wks in 13 overs)	58			
Did not bat: Ntini				
Fall of wickets: 1-5, 2-5, 3-5, 4-5, 5-10, 6-12, 7-22, 8-37				
Bowler O M R W				
Powell	3	0	6	1
Taylor	3	1	6	3
Bravo	2	0	16	0
Edwards	3	0	14	1
Sammy	2	0	9	1
WEST INDIES				
Parchment c Duminy b Pollock	10			
Smith b Steyn	7			
Morton b Steyn	20			
Chanderpaul not out	8			
Samuels b Steyn	1			
Bravo b Steyn	0			
Ramdin not out	12			
Extras: (lb-1, w-1)	2			
Total: (For 5 wks in 9.5 overs)	60			
Did not bat: Sammy, Taylor, Edwards, Powell				
Fall of wickets: 1-10, 2-32, 3-39, 4-41, 5-41				
Bowler O M R W				
Pollock	2	0	19	1
Ntini	3	0	16	0
Steyn	3	0	9	4
Morkel	1	0	5	0
Philander	0.5	0	10	0
Result: West Indies won by 5 wickets.				
Man-of-the-match: Jerome Taylor.				
Umpires: Ian Howell and Brian Jerling.				

Victory Day volleyball title Navy's

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Navy won the Victory Day volleyball title for the first time when they came from behind to defeat Bangladesh Army in a five-set thriller yesterday.

Army won the first set 25-18 in the Top-Five Victory Day volleyball tournament final at the Dhaka Volleyball Stadium but the sailors won 25-21 and 25-21 to take the lead.

Army levelled again after winning the fourth set 25-15 but the decider went to Navy who sealed the championship 3-2 with a 15-9 victory.

It was Army's fifth abortive attempt to win the title as they finished runners-up after reaching all five finals. It was also the first time four-time winners Bangladesh Rifles failed to make the final pairing.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh VDP won the women's series 3-1 beating Bangladesh Ansar.

Abdur Rahman Sarkar, managing director of National Bank, distributed prizes as chief guest.

Bhajji rates

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Day. "It depends on how the pitches are looking, of course, but India doesn't have a problem playing spin," he said in the Herald. "Hogg has been great in one-day cricket but I think ... Australia should use four quicks." Lawson said Michael Clarke and Andrew Symonds could chip in to provide the slow bowling.

Lawson, whose team lost a series to India last week, warned the Australians they would not take any physical or verbal backward steps. "They will stand up to whatever is thrown at them," he said. Harbhajan agreed with Lawson's view.

Media seek

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motivated. If he fails, he has to apologise to the media for his recklessness," demanded the journalists who also threatened to boycott all news concerning Sultan.

"We will announce him persona non gratta in sports if he does not seek unconditional request for forgiveness."

Kamalur Rahman, Manazrul Haque, Syed Mamun, Mosharraf Hossain, Sarwar Hossain, Aminul Haque Mullick and Mojib Rahman, among others, spoke on the occasion.

Sajidul replaces

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national side," said Sajidul, who first got the news from national selector Naimur Rahman during the national league match, which his team lost to hosts Dhaka.

"Sri Lankan Chaminda Vass is my ideal because I always look for control while bowling. I had a big problem with control but I worked hard in the off-season which helped me a lot to perform well in the national league," said Sajidul, who hails from Rangpur.

The baby-faced, however, said that his main objective is to cement a place in the national side.

"It's easy to get a call up but difficult to keep the position. But I have a dream to serve the national team for a long time," he hoped.

Mixed reaction

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have to put in a lot of effort to get used to it.

The technology was first tested at the 2005 Under-17 World Cup and may be used at the next World Cup in 2010.

The system uses a magnetic field to provide real-time feedback to a central computer, which tracks the exact location of the ball on the field and sends the data to the referee.

"It's good. We did not notice any different particulars with regards to other Adidas balls," said Ancelotti, whose team beat Boca 4-2 in the final.

"It is a good consistency and the trajectories are respected." World governing body FIFA did not offer any immediate assessment but said the test findings would be reviewed by an international board in March.

England set for battle  
Final Test against Sri Lanka starts today

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

Players and fans alike will be forced to wait just a little while longer for international cricket to return to the tsunami-ravaged city of Galle, after a late shower on Monday afternoon forced the authorities to delay the start time of the third and final Test between England and Sri Lanka.

After two days of sunshine, including a swelteringly hot final day of practice, all the puddles in the outfield had dried and the muddy banks had been baked to a golden brown finish, but such is the tight-rope that this ground has walked in the build-up to the match, that a half-hour shower was enough to tip the balance and force the start time to be pushed back by two hours.

Play is now scheduled to get underway at 12pm local time which, according to a Sri Lanka Cricket spokesman, will give the groundstaff sufficient time to tend to a damp wicket and dry the outfield ahead of a last-minute mowing. Inevitably, the news has given rise to fears that the match could end up as a complete washout, but after everything that this ground has been through in the past three years, the teams are sure to do everything in their power to get the contest underway.

As far as Sri Lanka Cricket is concerned, the stadium is already open for business. Monday morning, it was given the presidential seal of approval, as the country's leader, Mahinda Rajapakse, flew in by helicopter from Colombo to officially open the pavilion that now bears his name. The centre of Galle was shut down for two hours amid frenzied levels of security, and the fuss presumably didn't help the army of workers around the ground, whose last-minute touches will now be going on longer after the 11th hour.

However gloomy the current prognosis may be, the state of the stadium is already so far removed

from the scene three years ago. "It's very hard to even imagine what it was like," England's captain, Michael Vaughan, said. "I just remember pictures of buses and debris flying around the ground. That's why this week is a special week for all the Sri Lankan people, and we're just delighted to be the first team here. Hopefully we can spoil things a bit by winning, but I think there is a bigger picture here. The game of cricket is back in Galle and everyone should really be celebrating."

After so many years out of service, there is an understandable mystery as to how the pitch will play. "The two wickets we've been using are four or five metres away from tomorrow's pitch, and they have been pretty fast and bouncy and seamed," Vaughan said. "The test strip has a bit less grass and is softer, with a bit more moisture. We'll have to wait and see because I think it'll be a bit of a lottery for everyone."

England have options aplenty for their line-up. Matthew Hoggard has been named in a 12-man squad and could slot back in to lead the attack, although Vaughan did speak enigmatically of a mystery niggler in the England camp, which turned out to be an ear infection that's been afflicting Steve Harmison. After the performance he put in at Colombo, it ought to require an amputated limb to stop him from picking up where he left off.

Had the heavens not distorted the issue this week, Graeme Swann would probably have been a shooin to make his debut as Monty Panesar's spin twin, but he could yet feature if England gamble and push the in-form Matt Prior up to No. 6, thus making room for a five-man attack. The dangers of such a strategy are inherent, but England are in a strange situation with their batsmen -- all of them have shown glimpses of form, but no-one as yet has made a century.

"I'd rather have it this way round with us all playing well but not going on," said Vaughan. "We all look in

good touch, but it's just a matter of getting over that barrier. There's no reason why someone this week won't stick their hand up and get a real big one for us." The flip side of taking a risk with the selection, however, would be the ramifications of defeat. If England return home with a 2-0 deficit, they will slip three places to No. 5 in the world rankings, with Sri Lanka moving in the other direction, ahead of India and South Africa.

Either way, all such selection thoughts will be postponed to the last available minute. "Who knows what the wicket will do," said Vaughan. "All we've got is hindsight to assess the best bowlers to get 20 wickets on this pitch. We just have to make sure we perform well and to a really high standard. Winning Test matches over here is really difficult, so we need to set the building blocks early in the game, and get Sri Lanka under pressure."

Even as the afternoon sun was baking down on Galle, the groundstaff were covering every available inch of grass with tarpaulins, pinned in place with tractor tyres, as an insurance against the elements. At 4pm, it began to rain, but not with the torrential force of days gone by. Somehow the show is going to go ahead this week.

SQUADS

ENGLAND (from): Michael Vaughan (captain), Alastair Cook, Ian Bell, Kevin Pietersen, Paul Collingwood, Ravi Bopara, Matthew Prior, Matthew Hoggard, Ryan Sidebottom, Steve Harmison, Monty Panesar, Graeme Swann.

SRI LANKA (from): Mahela Jayawardene (captain), Kumar Sangakkara, Michael Vandort, Upul Tharanga, Chamara Silva, Tillekeratne Dilshan, Prasanna Jayawardene, Chaminda Vaas, Lasith Malinga, Chanaka Welagedera, Malinga Bandara, Sujeewa de Silva, Muttiah Muralidaran.

Umpires: Daryl Harper and Asad Rauf.

'It's a four-horse race'

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the physical nature of the contest.

"The spirit in the side in absolutely amazing. Where we have improved is in the fight," he said. "We were not dominated in the duels and the one-on-ones. Overall we dominated that area and that is not normally the case."

The spiteful atmosphere that surrounded Ashley Cole's first return to Arsenal following the Chelsea left-back's controversial transfer last year turned out to be the perfect backdrop to the match.

Cole was jeered throughout and his frustration boiled over when he made an obscene gesture at the Arsenal fans after the final whistle. Chelsea manager Avram Grant

has more pressing concerns than Cole's temper. John Terry will have scans on an ankle injury that forced him to come off before half-time.

Terry, who had been involved in a flare-up with Cesc Fabregas moments earlier, was caught by Emmanuel Ebou'e's late tackle.

Grant believes Terry has ligament damage rather than a break and will be praying the England defender is back soon.

With Didier Drogba absent and Andriy Shevchenko short of confidence, Chelsea lacked a cutting edge.

They fell behind in first half injury time when Petr Cech made a rare, costly error. The keeper misjudged Fabregas's corner and Gallas, a former Chelsea player, was

on hand to head into the empty net.

Shevchenko's one threatening moment came late on but Manuel Almunia, who had a fine game, brilliantly tipped his free-kick over.

Grant, whose side lost for the first time in 17 matches, is convinced Chelsea did enough to show they can still feature in the title battle.

"It is disappointing but if we continue like this it will be ok for us. It is not the end of the world," he said. "Six points at this time of the season is nothing. It will not be easy, but it is possible."

"Arsenal had all their players and we did not but there was no difference between us and them."



PHOTO: COURTESY

Winners of the AKTEL Victory Day Golf Tournament pose with chief guest Dato' Abdul Malek Bin Abdul Aziz, High Commissioner of Malaysia, and special guest Major General Md. Abdul Mubeen, General Officer Commanding, 24th Infantry Division, Chittagong, during the prize giving ceremony at Bhatiyari Golf and Country Club recently.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS	37 The girl	DOWN	24 Lens
1 Guitars' kin	38 Nary	1 Cold War abbr.	Than Perfect
5 Masseuse's workplace	a soul	2 Dock with a punch	25 Encountered
8 Performances	41 Dobbys of CNN	3 Sea eagle	26 Perched
12 First name of 24-	42 Huck's pal	5 "Phooey!"	27 Sie's
Down	43 Jason's ship	6 -- and Circumstances	courtier-pat
13 Go like a frog	46 Rurally unpretentious	7 Gorilla	28 Pose queries
14 Paddock	48 Tropical tree	8 Houston arena	29 Trigger's rider
15 Set of symptoms	49 -- Got a Secret!	9 "Arrivederci"	31 Central
17 Head alternative	50 Wading bird of Egypt	10 Small	34 Flamenco cheer
18 Caviar	51 Sheltered neighbor	11 Vend	35 Slay away from
19 "Alley --"	52 Simpsons' Flanders	16 Street	37 Started a garden
20 Slobber	53 Collections	20 Dress in	38 California wine valley
21 Wrestling surface		21 Piano	40 Look lasciviously
22 Court		22 Polishing agent	41 Zilch, at Wimbledon
23 Ready to rumble		23 Use a calculator	42 Collier for Hamlet
26 Coastal buildup			43 Leave out
30 Air for a pair			44 Disarray
31 Upper limit			46 Cacophony
32 Approximately			47 Towel designation
33 Motown			
35 Low and throaty			
36 Anti-quoted			

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CRYPTOQUIP

DE P ZQVCOI QE NDSFK PSI  
CISZGIF QW P NSPWZG  
QE P ZDBSVK BSII, BGIT  
APT NI QVB QW P ODAL  
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WHEN A SAILOR HAS TO DO CARPENTRY WORK ON HIS SHIP, DO YOU THINK HE SHOULD USE A SEA SAW?  
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: I equals E