

'My daughter is better than Buchanan'

PTI, Melbourne

Launching a lampoon at John Buchanan, former captain Ian Chappell has said that his daughter would not have done a bad job as coach of the Australian team.

Defending spin great Shane Warne, who has been criticised for his panning of Buchanan, Chappell said the former coach's contribution in Australia's dream run was nil.

"It's a simple decision. The captain is 95 per cent important; the coach is five per cent important. Guess who I am going to worry about first?" The 'News Limited' quoted Chappell as saying. "Shane Warne would have been a magnificent attacking captain for Australia.

"A lot of people refer to John Buchanan's record as coach. How many wickets and how many catches and how many runs did he make? He didn't make any."

"His contribution to those victories in my opinion is absolutely nil. Is someone going to tell me that if my daughter had coached Australia, would the results have been any different?"

"I am here to tell you the results wouldn't have been any different at all. In fact, they might have been better without him there."

Biman clinch Chess League

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Biman clinched the title of the Dutch-Bangla Bank First Division Chess League when they won the last round game against Mohakhal Prodig Sangha 4-0 at the federation hall-room on Thursday.

The national flag carrier bagged 45 points to retain the title and it was their thirteenth league success since they had earned the laurel in 1980.

Leoni Chess Club became runners-up by winning the last round game against Dhaka University Chess Club 3-1 to increase their tally to 43 points while Destiny 2000 Limited finished third with a 3-1 victory over i2soft Solution Ltd.

Chittagong Mohammedan Sporting Club secured 38.5 points after beating Sonali Bank 2.5-1.5 in the last round to secure the fourth spot.

A total of 14 teams took part in the round-robin system league.

Spurs gift

FROM PAGE 20

stoppage time goal gave Reading a 2-1 win at the Madejski Stadium, just as it seemed that Michael Chopra's 82nd-minute penalty would be enough to earn Roy Keane's side a point.

Reading had gone ahead through Icelandic defender Ivar Ingimarsson with just over 20 minutes left.

Managerless Fulham moved out of the bottom three, ahead of Sunderland on goal difference, after a 1-1 draw at home to second-bottom Wigan, who took the lead through Marcus Bent but were forced to settle for a point when American winger Clint Dempsey equalised.

Tamim ton

FROM PAGE 17

48.5 overs was at least 30 runs short of a total.

The Tigers needed early wickets and Mashrafe Mortaza and Nazmul Hossain bowled splendidly in the first four over without luck. Having seen off the first few overs the aces openers Hitchcock (35) and Guttill (59) started playing their strokes. Sajidul Islam, the left-arm paceman who was flown in on Wednesday bowled first change and the batsmen attacked him from the start. Sajidul went for 31 from his first three overs. Only left-arm spinner Abdur Razzaq (9-0-29-0) looked threatening as the failure to get breakthroughs cost Bangladesh dearly.

There were a couple of catches that went down with Siddique dropping a sharp one at second slip of Hitchcock from the bowling of Mortaza while Aftab floored an easier one at point. The highlight of the fielding performance was a stunning catch taken by Nazmul who ran a fair distance to his right at long off and held on to the ball with one hand.

"We again gave away the match between the 20th and 40th overs where we lost four wickets. We are doing some of the things right like the top order is playing sensibly and we are not losing wickets in heaps in the first 20 which is a definite improvement. The bowlers tried their best but I think 280 or 290 would have been the right kind of score today and we should have got there. The batsman who gets in must realise that he has to be there till the end," said Ashraful.

"I did not step out too much and played straight. I felt good on the outside also. I left out a lot of balls in the beginning of my innings and that helped in getting my eye in. Unfortunately we still lost but I believe we are getting there and we will do very well if everyone performs like they can," said century-maker Tamim.

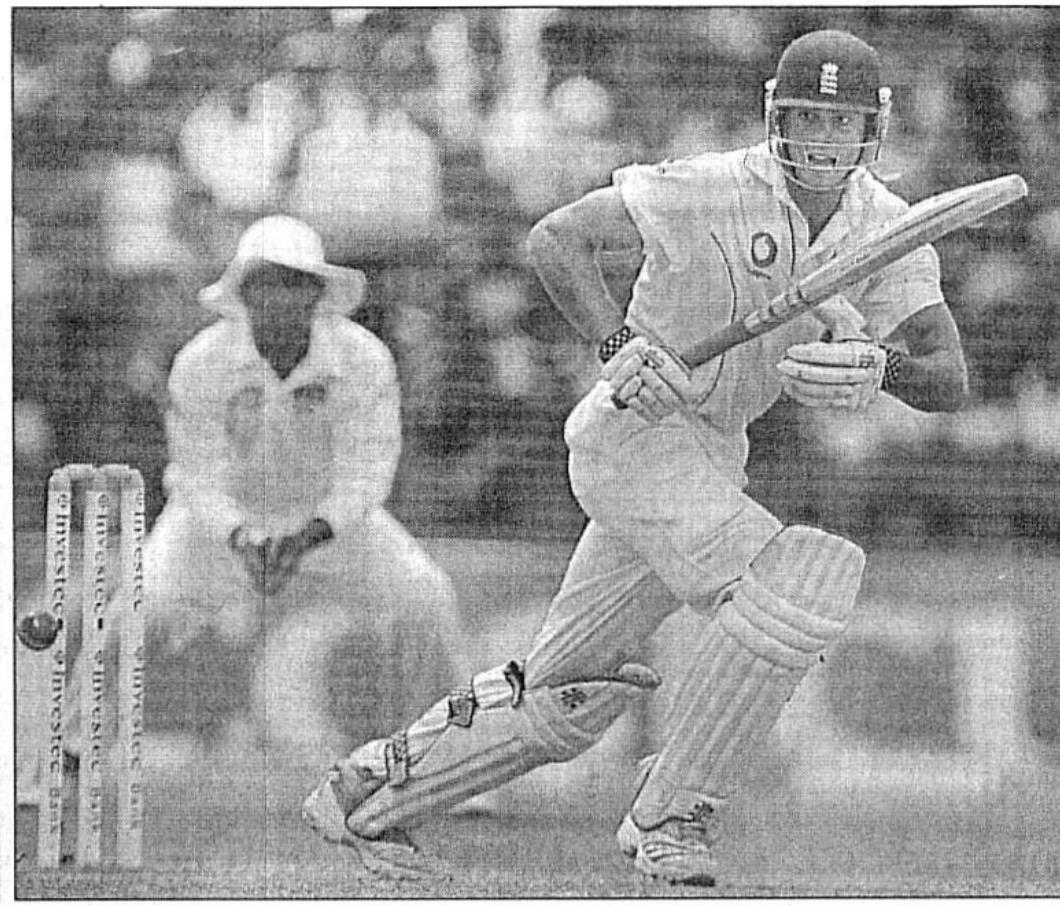


PHOTO: AFP

Rain denies Lanka

Still win series 1-0

Cricket

AFP, Galle

Opener Alastair Cook hit a defiant century before rain washed out the last session to help England draw the final cricket Test against Sri Lanka there on Saturday.

Left-handed Cook made 118 as England, needing to bat out the fifth day after following on 418 runs behind, groped to 251-6 in their second innings when a heavy downpour ruined Sri Lanka's hopes of victory.

Rain interrupted play for an hour after lunch but a second wet spell in the post-tea session waterlogged the Galle International Stadium and forced the umpires to abandon the match with 35 overs remaining.

Sri Lanka took the series 1-0, having won the first Test in Kandy by 88 runs, but would have moved to second place behind Australia in the official rankings if they had secured a 2-0 scoreline.

Muttiah Muralidaran finished with three wickets, but the hero of the final day was young Essex opener Cook who stood rock solid at the crease for six hours and 24 minutes missing the last ball of that over to put Sri Lanka on top.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard on the final day of the third and final Test between England and Sri Lanka at the Galle International Stadium on Saturday:

SRI LANKA: First innings 499-8 declared (M Jayawardene 213 not out, Dilshan 84, Vaas 90; Harmison 3-104)

ENGLAND: First innings 81 (Collingwood 29; Vaas 4-28, Welegedara 2-17)

ENGLAND: Second innings

Cook/P Jayawardene b Welegedara 118 Vaughan/C Jayawardene b Welegedara 24 Bell b Muralidaran 34

Test in Colombo being the next highest score.

Cook was, however, lucky to get that far after he was dropped down the leg-side by wicketkeeper Prasanna Jayawardene off Lasith Malinga in the day's second over when on 54.

England lost three wickets in four balls in the morning session to slip from a comfortable 200-2 to 202-5 by lunch before Matt Prior gave Cook company for two hours to add 50 for the seventh wicket.

Cook departed after tea, caught behind off debutant Charaka Welegedara, but Prior remained unbeaten on a tour 19 before rain came to England's rescue.

The overnight pair of Cook and Ian Bell put on 61 for the second wicket when Muralidaran bowled Bell for 34 with a ball that kept low on the dual-paced wicket.

Kevin Pietersen (30) helped Cook put on 72 for the third wicket before a dramatic over from Muralidaran 15 minutes before lunch left England in tatters.

Muralidaran dismissed Pietersen and Paul Collingwood in three balls before Ravi Bopara was run out off the last ball of that over to put Sri Lanka on top.

Cook showed why he is rated as one of modern cricket's most promising batsmen by scoring a seventh Test century before his 23rd birthday on Christmas Day.

Sachin Tendulkar of India and Pakistan's Saeed Manjand had scored seven tons by their 23rd year, while Australian legend Don Bradman had 3-104.

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Test in Colombo being the next highest score.

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