

Smith not SA's best skipper, says Jennings

CRICINFO, undated

Outspoken former South Africa coach Ray Jennings believes there are better candidates to captain the national side than Graeme Smith.

Jennings has no issue with Smith, the batsman, who recently posted a new world Test opening partnership with Neil McKenzie, but does have reservations when it comes to him leading the side. "Graeme Smith is a superb cricketer. He has presence and mental toughness," he told *The Wisden Cricketer*. "From a captaincy point of view I believe there are one or two other guys who are able to lead the team better than he does."

When pressed to name his preferred candidates, Jennings replied: "Names aren't really important to me. I believe there are better guys to do the job but that's my opinion. As a batsman there's no doubt I'll have Graeme in my side. He's a solid cricketer and a fighter."

When asked to comment on the recent high profile fall out between senior administrators about racial quotas, Jennings said: "South African cricket has to understand that they don't need to put issues like this in the media. They could have had the fight behind closed doors and iron it out there. It has put me and a lot of cricketers in an awkward position."

"I'm sad that coloured players in the team could have a stigma attached, where they feel they are underprivileged when that's not the case. It's not about having a 50-50 or 60-40 split between white and coloured players. In our country the sides are picked on their cricketing ability because the players of colour are good enough to play."

Jennings, who served a six-month stint as national coach, also said he would take up the post if it came around again, but only under his own terms. "I would definitely take it up again but there would be a few conditions. I would look at the combination of the side: how it gets picked. I would also look at my management staff and how I put that together."

In a terse media release, Cricket South Africa said Jennings claimed to have been "misquoted" in the article.

Taslim Arif no more

AFP, Karachi

Former Pakistan wicketkeeper-batsman Taslim Arif has died after a brief illness, family sources said Friday.

The 54-year-old, who was the junior squad selector, played six Tests for Pakistan, scoring 501 runs at an impressive average of 62.62 and took nine victims. He also played two one-day internationals.

Arif complained of chest pains in the afternoon and was later diagnosed with a lung infection. He died in hospital late on Thursday, said a family source.

Arif hit 90 and 46 on his Test debut against India at Calcutta in 1979 but was more famous for his 210 not out against Greg Chappell's Australia in Faisalabad the following year.

The double hundred stood as the highest score by a wicketkeeper-batsman until Zimbabwe's Andy Flower surpassed it with 232 not out in 2001.

Arif also briefly played for Kerry Packer in the World Series in Australia in late 1970s and early 80s.

He later became a popular television and radio commentator and also ran a cricket academy.

Former colleague Javed Miandad said Arif's death was a tragedy.

"We all loved him, he endeared himself to everyone he played with. It is a great loss because he was there for all whenever needed," said Miandad, who was Arif's captain when he made the double century.

Another colleague, Iqbal Qasim, said: "Arif was a very kind, happy-go-lucky sort of character and we enjoyed each other's company. His death has saddened us all."

The Pakistan Cricket Board offered its condolences to Arif's family.

"With Arif's death we have lost a good cricketer and a great cricketer's mind. We console Arif's family and share their grief," it said in a statement.

China top seeds for Thomas & Uber Cups

AFP, Jakarta

Defending champions China have been seeded one for both the Thomas Cup and Uber Cup badminton team world championships here in May.

Hosts Indonesia are seed two for the Thomas Cup while their women are seed five behind arch-rivals Malaysia for the Uber Cup.

A total of 12 nations will compete in each of the tournaments, being held from May 11-18 at the Senayan Sports Center Complex in Jakarta.

Hosts Indonesia and title holders China qualified automatically, with the rest of the teams coming through continental qualifying events.



PHOTO: COURTESY

Sajjad Hossain (R) addressing a press briefing at the Kalabagan Krira Chakra tent on Thursday while revealing facts about the Boost Power Cup cricket tournament.

Biman, MSC, DOHS win

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Old DOHS: 202-9 in 50 overs (Rajin 86, Mehrab 36; Delwar 4-34).

SURJO TARUN: 199-7 in 50 overs (Shamsur 62, Nayem 58; Monir 2-35).

Result: Old DOHS won by three runs.

BIMAN: 247-8 in 50 overs (Kapali 91, Iqbal 53*; Azim 3-53).

SONARGAON: 232 all out in 48.1 overs (Mehrab 78, Sharifullah 74; Hasan 3-36).

Result: Biman won by 15 runs.

November

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Probably the best preparation they can get to put their bodies through those sorts of workloads."

Michael Clarke and Stuart Clark joined Matthew Hayden and Brett Lee in welcoming the decision to pull out of the tour. "I don't think 'disappointed' is the right word -- I'm rapt Cricket Australia and the Australian Cricketers' Association made the decision and it didn't have to come down to individual players," Clarke told AAP. "I'm very relieved and happy they've done that for the playing group."

Clark said the squad was worried about the situation in Pakistan. "I don't think anyone likes it when a cricket tour gets called off because that's our job, but there were obviously concerns from everyone involved," he said. "We're getting third-hand information, reading the papers and listening to the news on the TV and we were obviously getting the sensational news about bombings and stuff like that."

The final will be held on March 26.

BIMAN VS SONARGAON

Nafis Iqbal hit only two boundaries in his 53 as he let Alok Kapali smash the Sonargaon bowlers. But Kapali fell nine runs short of a century, after having struck four sixes and six boundaries in his 82-ball whirlwind knock. Then it was Mahbubul Alam Robin who smashed three sixes in his 17-ball 35.

Mohammad Azim of Sonargaon took three for 53.

Despite Mehrab Hossain's fine run-a-ball 78 and Sharifullah's 74 off 87 balls, Sonargaon failed to earn points for the fourth time in a row as they fell short by 5 runs. Ahsanullah Hasan took three while man-of-the-match Kapali and Nabil Samad took two each.

BRIEF SCORES

VICTORIA: 140 all out in 44.3 overs (Riyad 31; Shuvo 4-21).

MSC: 142-0 in 28.5 overs (Imtiaz 61*, Imrul 79*).

Result: MSC won by 10 wickets.

LOCAL SNIPS

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Issa Khan spiker Anisur Rahman was adjudged the player of the eight-meet.

Assistant Chief of Naval Staff (Operations) Rear Admiral Mustafizur Rahman distributed trophies as chief guest.

INDEPENDENCE DAY FOOTBALL

Khagrachari Correspondent: Muslimpara Ekadash trounced T&T Area Ekadash 4-1 in the opening match of the Independence Day Cup football tournament at the Matiranga Pilot High School ground in Matiranga here.

Matiranga Army Zone organised the tournament to mark the Independence Day.

Matiiranga Army Zone Commander Lt Col Abdullah Al Yusuf inaugurated the 11-team meet.

RANGPUR CORRESPONDENT: Dinajpur defeated Rangpur Area 6-5 in sudden-death tiebreakers to reach the semifinals of the 2nd Sona Moitri Independence Day Gold Cup football tournament. The regulation period of the opening match of the 9-team meet at the Rangpur Stadium ended in a goalless draw.

The other participating teams are: Rangpur district, Nilphamari, Kurigram, Gaibandha, Panagarh, Lalmonirhat and Jyapurhat.

Rajshahi divisional commissioner Hafizur Rahman Bhuiyan declared the tournament open.

The final will be held on March 26.

England take firm grip

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Was also guilty of giving Taylor a life slip.

Broad lasted seven balls before being bowled by Oram for one and Collingwood moved from his overnight 48 to 65 before he was trapped in front by Gillespie.

Gillespie then claimed Ryan Sidebottom for 14 and Anderson with his first ball to produce figures of 4-79 off 20 overs while Oram took 3-46 from 29 overs.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at close of the second day of the second Test between New Zealand and England at the Basin Reserve on Friday:

ENGLAND: First innings 342 (Ambrose 102, Collingwood 65; Gillespie 4-79, Oram 3-46)

NEW ZEALAND: First innings

How c Strauss b Anderson 7

Bell b Anderson 0

Fleming c Pietersen b Anderson 34

Sinclair c Ambrose b Anderson 9

Taylor c Ambrose b Anderson 53

Oram lbw b Sidebottom 8

McCullum c Strauss b Broad 25

Vettori not out 50

Mills c Bell b Collingwood 1

Gillespie b Collingwood 0

Martin b Collingwood 1

Extras: (lb-8, w-1, nb-1) 10

Total: (All out in 57.5 overs) 198

Fall of wickets: 1-4, 2-9, 3-31, 4-102, 5-113, 6-113, 7-165, 8-176, 9-180, 10-198.

Bowler O M R W

Sidebottom 17 3 36 1

Anderson 20 4 73 5

Broad 12 0 56 1

Collingwood 7.5 1 23 3

Panesar 1 0 2 0

ENGLAND: Second innings

Cook not out 2

Vaughan not out 0

Extras: (nb-2) 2

Total: (For no loss in 5 overs) 4

To bat: Strauss, Pietersen, Bell, Collingwood, Ambrose, Broad, Sidebottom, Panesar, Anderson.

Bowler O M R W

Martin 3 2 3 0

Mills 2 1 1 0

Toss: New Zealand

Umpires: Steve Davis (AUS), Rudi Koertzen (RSA)

Match referee: Javagal Srinath (India)

Gibbs c Ashraf b Razzak 10

Smith not out 68

Petersen lbw b Mosharra 24

De Villiers b Reza 40

Duminy not out 0

Extras: (w-4, lb-1) 5

Total: (For three wkt in 34.2 overs) 147

Not bat: Amla, Morkel, Morkel, Harris, Botha, Steyn.

Fall of wickets: 1-19, 2-59, 3-138.

Bowler O M R W

Mortaza 4 0 18 0

Razzak 10 0 27 1

Shakib 9.2 1 47 0

Mosharraf 6 0 26 1

Reza 5 1 28 1

Result: South Africa won by seven wickets and clinched three-match

series 3-0.

Man-of-the-match: Albie Morkel.

Man-of-the-series: Graeme Smith.

Toss: Bangladesh

Umpires: Aleem Dar (PAK) and Nadir Shah (BAN)

TV Umpire: Akhtaruddin Shahin (BAN)

Match referee: Ranjan Madugalle (SRI)

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