

Marsh comes in for Jaques

Shaun Marsh has been called up to replace the injured Phil Jaques for Australia's tour of India. Jaques was ruled out of Australia's tour of India by a long-standing back injury prior to their second Test at Mohali.

Marsh, significantly, has experience of Indian conditions; he played for Kings XI Punjab in the IPL earlier this year and ended the tournament as the highest runs scorer.

"Shaun has been selected having opened the batting for Australia in the one-day international arena and shown great potential," Andrew Hilditch, the chairman of selectors, said.

The third Test gets underway on October 29 in Delhi. India lead the series 1-0 with two to play.

Div II football

Prantik Krira Chakra beat Friends Social Welfare Organisation 5-3 goals in the Metropolitan Second Division Football League at the Birshreshtha Shaheed Sepoy Mohammad Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur yesterday.

Mahmudur Rahman Riyad struck twice, while Abul Hossain Rubel, Riuzziddin Biswas and Eco scored one goal each for the winners.

In the day's other match, Gazirhat SC scraped to a 1-0 win over BG Press SRC at the same venue.

Ponting

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Lee hasn't been at his best so far on the tour, his four wickets in the first two Tests costing nearly 60 runs apiece.

"To have held it for a couple of years is good. I have a couple more records in the bag so I've still got a few to hold on to. But it's a feeling that I've had my opportunity. To get there first of all and to achieve it and hold that mark for a period of time is great in itself. There was no sadness at all."



The 23 young booters, who will receive training at the David Beckham Academy in London, pose for photograph with officials at a reception accorded by their sponsor Emirates at a local hotel yesterday.

Beckham beckons 23

Football

SPORTS REPORTER

Dream comes true for 23 budding footballers who will leave for England on October 26 for higher training.

The journey began two years ago with 4,500 footballers joining trials, organised by Canary Wharf, UK, for this final leg where they will spend three weeks at the David Beckham Academy in London.

The Canary Wharf Bangladesh Youth Football Academy, brainchild of the UK real estate company, announced in August 2006 in presence of the then British High Commissioner to Bangladesh Anwar Chowdhury that it would hunt talents from all corners of the country and train them to contribute in development of the game.

From the 4,500, the coaching staff of the academy headed by former international and Bangladesh coach Golam Sarwar Tipu picked up 155 for long term camp and selected the final 23 with help of visiting British coaches.

Renowned for their worldwide support for football, Emirates is sponsoring the whole programme from the beginning.

"This academy started with 4,500 young hopefuls and 23 footballers have been selected from this large group. During this period, we have facilitated the travel of coaches from London to Dhaka for various training sessions. And today we are happy to be facilitating the travel of these young footballers to the home of English football so that they may sharpen their skills," told Emirates' area manager Bangladesh while addressing a reception it accorded to the footballers.

"You are the tigers of the future. I hope you would represent the national team one day. Also, you have to set standards on and off the field in England and at home," he added. Coordinator Fazlur Rahman Babul, also a member of the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF), thanked Canary Wharf and Emirates for coming forward with a training programme of this magnitude.

The three weeks at Beckham Academy will greatly inspire and immensely benefit the players. We have two more years to go in the four-year project and we want to do it honestly," said Babul. "If we can make just one player fit to play in the English semi-professional league, we will think this project as successful."

The English FA will accord a reception to the academy team at the Wembley on October 30 while they will train at the famous West Ham Academy from November 3-7 apart from visiting Arsenal FC and playing a couple of friendly matches.

"Most of the boys came from poor families where they did not have proper nutrition. It was hard for them to come this far without the support from the academy," said head coach Tipu. "I never even dreamed of going to England. At the academy I've seen how football can change a man's life," told one of the 23 players, Aminul Islam from Rajshahi.

BFF vice-presidents Badal Roy and Shaikat Ali Khan Jahangir also spoke on the occasion. Seven officials will accompany the academy team, which return home on November 14.

The players: Sohel Rana, Shojib Chowdhury, Aminul Islam, Sujon Ali, Loknath Debnath, Sajidur Rahman, Sujoy Mallek, Rahat Ahmed, Sehab, Nadim Mahmud, Mohammad Ashak, Topu Barman, Jashim Uddin Chanchal, Arifur Jaman, Rabby Bhuiyan, Saroar Hossain, Mohammad Anuzal, Pial Hossain, Anik Barman, Sabbir Ahmed, Omar Faruk, Farhadur Zaman.

Gillespie spurs Lee on

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

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much criticism of the Australian team after just one defeat. "When the Australians lose, the talk that era is over and stuff like that comes out. It's just one loss. We lost here in 2001. Of course the teams are different. Many big names have retired."

Gillespie suffered a similar situation when Ponting gave him only four overs in the second innings of the Manchester Test in 2005. However, Gillespie believes the situation was very different from the present scenario. "Look, I wasn't bowling well then. I was going for runs and not picking wickets (Gillespie had figures of 1 for 114 from 19 overs in the first innings). You don't have to be a rocket scientist to see that Ricky did the right thing."

"Here, Lee is not bowling badly. He is just a competitive guy and wants to contribute to the team. And it was sorted out after Ricky explained his reasons. The media has overblown it unnecessarily." Gillespie said there was too

There's something about Dhoni

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

There's something about Mahendra Singh Dhoni. His detractors call it luck, but whatever it is, it has worked. Twice this year, he has been told about half an hour before a Test that he will have to lead the side, and twice India have won comprehensively under him.

His 100 per cent win record is safe but Dhoni isn't shouting triumphantly from the rooftops just yet. "Playing (just) one Test and hitting a half century, you get an average of 50. So is the case if you hit a 100," Dhoni said, moments after securing India's biggest victory in terms of runs.

the last over of the second day. Mishra bowled an accurate wrong'un to trap Michael Clarke in front and one was reminded of the play to give Jangsher Sharma the final over of the World Twenty20 final. But Dhoni, to the amusement of all present, only said, "Fluke tha year [it was a fluke]."

What wasn't a fluke, though, was how Dhoni batted. He infused urgency into India's mindset with his aggressive approach and timely changes to the batting order. He had batted defensively in Bangalore and failed miserably, but in Mohali, he hooked his first ball for four -- a statement that he wanted to make amends.

"It was a perfect scenario," Dhoni said. "We had got off to a good start on a good batting track and the ball was old. I think that suited my form of batting because that is my strength. In between, if there is a situation, I can go back (on the defensive) like the Lord's innings."

"But I should play the kind of cricket that I play more often, and that is aggressive cricket. In between I was not really playing my natural game, thinking more about the scenario and conditions. I need to play to my strength which is going out there looking to score runs. It is not only about hitting, it's about being fractionally more positive than others."

to grab a stump as a souvenir, Ganguly merely walked up to congratulate his team-mates. Dhoni gave the man playing his last series, and also a centurion in this match, the stump he had taken for himself.

Dhoni later revealed that watching Ganguly was the most special part of this Test. "Sourav's getting to 7000 was very special. This is his last series and he is just going out and enjoying the game. He doesn't have any sort of pressure and that's how you want him to play. Sourav at his best, when he is playing his shots, is very different to others." And Ganguly, on his part, has played outstanding innings in both the Tests that Dhoni has captained.

Keeping calm on the field is quickly becoming Dhoni's signature, and he kept his cool off it as well, when a couple of potentially explosive questions were put to him. He was asked about his players' behaviour during the Test -- Zaheer Khan was fined 80 per cent of his match fee -- and whether overtly aggressive sledging was the only way to beat Australia.

There was a beautiful moment after the completion of India's 320-run win. While everybody rushed

Laxman signs for Lancs

AFP, London

Indian Test batsman VVS Laxman has signed up to play for Lancashire in 2009, the English county side announced on Wednesday.

The move, which still requires approval by the Board of Control for Cricket in India, will see the player arrive in England after his Indian Premier League participation and stay for the rest of the season.

A previous four-week stint with the county in 2007 yielded 541 runs in eight matches, averaging 54.28 in first-class cricket.

Currently representing his country in the Test series against Australia, Laxman said: "I thoroughly enjoyed my short stay with Lancashire in 2007, and I am thrilled to be returning to Old Trafford next year."

"Next year I hope to play a significant role in leading Lancashire to Championship success," Mike Watkinson, Lancashire's cricket manager, added: "It gives me great pleasure to secure the services of this extremely talented batsman for next season."

"He will bring star quality to our batting line-up for both championship and one-day cricket, and his wealth of experience is perfect for our younger batsman to learn from and develop around."

"His contributions both on and off the field during his short stay in 2007 were outstanding and left a lasting impact on the players. We all look forward to welcoming VVS and his family back to Old Trafford next season."

Merdeka

FROM PAGE 17 what I wanted off the players. We did not have high hopes but they fulfilled my desires," told Manik yesterday after his first assignment as national coach.

"The footballers were totally committed and did their best. We could not do better than this with the team we have and the amount of training we could give them. It was one step forward and we can go four more steps ahead if we stick to the task," said the former national footballer.

Team leader and Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) vice-president Badal Roy opined that lack of experience cost the team certain victories in the Merdeka Cup. "If we had a tougher domestic competition, the players would have been more accustomed to pressure. We created many chances but the strikers missed them as they are not used to very tough situations."

"Emily was outstanding in the whole tournament but he has to learn when to shoot or release the ball. We did not have results but I would say it was a good tournament for us."

"Even Nepal have two players who can turn a match but we don't. We don't have any player like Arman Mia and we must work hard to fill in the void. "We have also learned many things. Every team went with a coaching staff of four to five. We have to stop sending officials and take more coaching staff," added the ex-national captain.

BCB talks

FROM PAGE 17 clear conception about what is the consequence of joining this league," said Ahmed Sajjadul Alam, BCB's media committee chairman, who was present at the meeting along with Gazi Ashraf Hossain, Shakil Kasem and Jalal Ahmed Chowdhury.

"The few other issues also came to the discussion like the financial problems of the grassroots players. We pointed it out and will definitely try to do something on that issue," he added.

When asked whether they will issue a warning for those who were involved in the proceedings, Sajjadul said that "We are keeping a track on the proceedings and the cricket board will come up with an appropriate response for those who are found to be involved in this."

Aus want

FROM PAGE 17 the next morning. Ponting though tried to defend his fast bowlers, none of whom had played a Test in India before this series.

"They have not been able to bowl in the right areas for a longer period as the Indians have. The key is to be consistent for extended periods of play. "Lee is a champion bowler. But as a fast bowler, if you are just a bit off, you can be made to look silly."

The Australian captain said the team was looking to bowling coach and reverse swing expert Troy Cooley to show the way out of the tangle.

"He can make a huge difference. He knows a thing or two about reverse swing bowling but at the same time he can't go out and execute things for us."

Cooley played a big part in England's Ashes success in 2005, teaching them how to keep one side of the ball rough while keeping the other shiny -- which in effect is what reverse swinging is all about.

The third Test of the Border-Gavaskar series begins in New Delhi on October 29 followed by the fourth and final in Nagpur from November 6.

Abusive Aussie press

Cricket

AFP, Sydney

Australia's cricketers were under fire from local media Wednesday who said the humiliating loss to India in the second Test in Mohali signalled the end of the world champions' control of the game.

Under the headline "Era of domination at an end", The Australian newspaper flayed the tourists for what it described as an "insipid 320-run loss" which follows a draw in the first Test of the four-match series.

"India has turned world cricket upside down by bullying Australia into submission," it said.

"Australia has been seriously outplayed," it continued, adding that the team had been brutally exposed without the retired greats Adam Gilchrist, Glenn McGrath and Shane Warne.

As talkback radio questioned whether the end of Australia's dominance had begun, debates

Down Under pondered the depleted stocks of spin bowlers in the face of the success of India's Harbhajan Singh and debutant Amit Mishra.

Noted in the coverage was the manner of the defeat at Mohali in which some members of the ascendant Indian team confronted the Australians -- with several on-field spats between players and Zaheer Khan fined for celebrating Matthew Hayden's dismissal.

The "verbal lynch directed at the Australians has made even the hard-nosed world champions question whether a line has been crossed," Sydney's Daily Telegraph said.

But ultimately, the Australians underperformed on the field and lost the mental battle, The Sydney Morning Herald said in a piece by commentator Peter Roebuck.

"Australia have lost before but it's been a long time since they were so comprehensively taken apart," it said in a front-page article.

"Everyone knew they could be beaten but not broken. No one expected the visitors to cave in or to

depart with their tails hanging between their legs.

"The Australians were humbled. Ricky Ponting's team was outbatted, outbowed, outfielded, out-thought, outrun, outplayed and outclassed."

As star paceman Brett Lee battled poor form, and Australia's spinners were unable to turn the ball away from the bat, none of the antipodean bowlers would have made it into the Indian squad, let alone team, Roebuck said.

Commentators have called for troubled all-rounder Andrew Symonds to rejoin the team after he was axed from the India tour for going fishing instead of attending a compulsory team meeting during a one-day series against Bangladesh.

But if Australia is to regain its previously formidable form, it must work to bring back some of the class lost with the retirement of Warne, McGrath and Gilchrist, they said.

"It is not possible to replace great cricketers with good cricketers and retain the same standard," Roebuck wrote. "Nothing lasts forever."

Kumble eyes Delhi return

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

Anil Kumble, India's Test captain, is confident of returning for the third Test against Australia in Delhi after sitting out the second game in Mohali due to a shoulder injury.

Kumble said it was unfortunate he could not be part of the combination which achieved India's biggest Test win in terms of runs -- 320 -- and that he was looking forward to returning to the Feroz Shah Kotla where he has taken 55 wickets in six games.

"It was very heartening to see MS (Dhoni) lead from the front and it was fantastic to watch the way the team approached the game and the intensity we kept up throughout," Kumble wrote in his syndicated newspaper column. "And while I

unfortunately had to sit this one out, I'm raring to get going at the Kotla, my favourite Test centre."

Kumble had a forgettable outing in the first match in Bangalore, going wicketless for only the third time in his Test career. He reacted strongly to media criticism about his captaincy, form, and fitness, and insisted he would return once fully fit.

Kris Srikkanth, the new chairman of selectors, agreed that Kumble had a good chance of returning for the Test, starting on October 29. "I'm very confident he will play," Srikkanth told ABC Radio. "One of the reasons he probably didn't play this (Mohali) match was so that he gets proper rest for the next two Tests."

Kumble's return, however, could come at the expense of the legspinner Amit Mishra, who took seven wickets on debut. Kumble

was very impressed with Mishra's use of flight and variations.

"With an eye to the future, it also augurs well for India that we've found someone like Amit," Kumble wrote. "An orthodox bowler, he spins the ball a lot, uses his flight very nicely and frankly, it was great watching him. The first five-for I got told me that if I could get one, I could get more. Confidence is critical. As Amit's five-for has come in his first game itself against Australia, it's even better for him."

He said Mishra was finally being rewarded after going through the grind in eight domestic seasons. "He bowled beautifully and not just by the debutant yardstick. All the hard yards he's done as a domestic cricketer served him well here. It's incredibly tough work, the domestic circuit and Amit serves as a perfect example of what perseverance can do."

Gavaskar slams refs for targeting Asians

Cricket

AFP, New Delhi

Former India captain Sunil Gavaskar accused match referees on Wednesday of singling out Asian players after Zaheer Khan was fined at the end of the second Test against Australia.

Zaheer was docked 80 per cent of his match fee by International Cricket Council (ICC) referee Chris Broad on Tuesday for an outburst against outgoing batsman Matthew Hayden during the Mohali Test.

Gavaskar, who resigned as head of the ICC's cricket committee earlier this year due to media commitments, said it was strange only Asian players were being hauled up

by match referees.

"If [Zaheer] swore at him, if he abused him, he obviously deserves to get punished," Gavaskar told the CNN-IBN news channel.

"But let's not mince words here. Every time, it is always an Indian or a sub-continent player who gets hauled up, never the Australians."

Gavaskar said he was surprised no Australian player was summoned by the referee during the ill-tempered match which India won by 320 runs to take a 1-0 lead in the four-match series.

"There were a lot of incidents in the match," he said. "Do you remember Virender Sehwag was given not out when everybody appealed and Ricky Ponting, the Australian captain, came from extra cover towards the

umpire and kept on appealing?"

"Now if that had been an Indian, the match referee would have taken him to task, fined him... This is where I think the ICC needs to actually get its act together."

This is not the first time that Gavaskar, the first batsman to score 10,000 runs in Test cricket, has accused ICC referees of being anti-Asian.

In January, he pointed the finger at South African referee Mike Procter for charging Indian spinner Harbhajan Singh with racial abuse against Australia's Andrew Symonds during the Sydney Test.

India almost abandoned the tour over Procter's ruling but agreed to continue after a separate ICC tribunal absolved Harbhajan of the charge.

A night of goals

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

teenager Ramsey, his summer signing from Cardiff. He said: "He is 17 and a half years old, he is a very young boy but very promising. His personality really comes out wherever he goes. He really wants the ball, he is not frightened."

"We had a really young team out tonight, at 22 years old (average age), and it's good to see." Bayern Munich ignored their poor league form to secure a convincing 3-0 win over Fiorentina with first-half goals by Germany striker Miroslav Klose and Bastian Schweinsteiger, as well as a late strike by Brazilian Ze Roberto on 90 minutes.

Wenger was also impressed by

Juventus produced a stunning rearguard action to hold on for a famous 2-1 victory over Real Madrid with Alessandro Del Piero and Amauri giving the hosts a two goal lead before Real's Dutch contingent laid siege to the Italians' goal but could only muster a single reply through Ruud van Nistelrooy.

The victory leaves Juve top of the group on seven points, one ahead of Real and well clear of Zenit St Petersburg and BATE Borisov, who drew 1-1 in Russia earlier in the day.

The result also eased the pressure on under-fire Juve boss Claudio Ranieri, whose team have been faltering in Serie A.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down words.

Cryptiquip puzzle grid with a key and a clue: "Yesterday's Cryptiquip: I KNOW A GUY WHO COMPLIMENTS HIS FELLOW CARPENTERS BY DECLARING 'BOY, YOU DO MITER FINE WORK!' Today's Cryptiquip Clue: V equals R"