

Moore's won't blame tactics

CRICINFO, undated

Peter Moores, the England coach, has refused to blame tactics for the six-wicket defeat in the first Test against India in Chennai on Monday.

"I don't think it's tactics, it's skill," Moores told Sky Sports. "To rotate spinners on a difficult surface like a Test match pitch in India takes a lot of skill."

Moores said he had been expecting more from the spinners, Monty Panesar and Graeme Swann, who he believed were still getting used to the conditions in India.

"He hasn't played competitive cricket for four months, so that was tough, and as a spinner it's hard. As the game went on he was getting back into some sort of rhythm."

"I thought Freddie bowled beautifully this [Monday] morning but we'll hope Mohali has a little bit more for our seamers and I think the spinners will also enjoy a little bit of bounce to bring them into the game," he said.

England's batting coach Andy Flower called the defeat "dispiriting" and believed the batsmen were defensive in their approach. "To be honest, I think we were a little defensive. I feel we could have been more attacking in our game," Flower was quoted as saying by PTT.

England managed a meagre 57 runs between lunch and tea on the fourth day, which offered the hosts a chance to get back into the match.

Flower, however, indicated that there would be no major replacements for the second Test. "We are not looking for huge changes but must look to capitalise on momentum," he said.

Bradman's

FROM PAGE 17 baggy green arrived," Leski told the Nine Network on Monday.

Leski said Richard Robins Jr eventually sold the cap, which comes with a letter of authenticity, in 2003.

Bradman, who died in 2001 aged 92, played his last match in England during the 1948 Ashes tour and retired with a yet-to-be-topped Test batting average of 99.94 despite scoring a duck in his final innings.

India discuss

FROM PAGE 17 until September 2009.

Two of his long-standing teammates, Sourav Ganguly and Anil Kumble, have recently announced their retirements.

Dravid has compiled 25 Test centuries and 53 fifties, earning the nickname "The Wall" for his obdurate style of play, but has gone 19 innings without reaching three figures.

Commenting on the form of his colleague, Tendulkar added: "This is not the first time a cricketer has faced such problems."

"It is a cycle. Sometimes you are at your peak and at other times you are down. It happens at some point. Even I have had my ups and downs."

Lorgat lauds

FROM PAGE 17

"They clearly have plenty of character and courage so I hope they can pick themselves up and go to Mohali for the second Test with lots to play for."

Looking ahead, Lorgat stressed: "Provided it is safe to do so, the show must always go on. We must stand together and rise above these forces that threaten our game and our way of life."

ICC president David Morgan, the former ECB chairman, is due to attend the second Test, which starts in the northern town of Mohali on Friday.



Players of Shaheed Jewel XI and Shaheed Mushtaque XI pose with Jewel's sister Sultana Ahmed (top, centre) and BCB officials after the annual Victory Day match at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium yesterday.

Press pardon England

CRICINFO, undated

AFP, London

The British press on Tuesday broadly excused England's defeat by India in the first Test in Chennai, saying the importance of their presence far outweighed concerns about their performance.

India won a thrilling match by six wickets on Monday after batting star Sachin Tendulkar scored the 41st Test century of his illustrious career.

In Tuesday's editions, newspapers here praised Tendulkar's "sensational" and "utterly brilliant" play, and noted the historic impact of his achievement so soon after the attacks in his home city of Mumbai that left 172 people dead.

"England, who had sensed victory in this emotionally charged Test, ultimately bowed to Tendulkar's unyielding determination to soothe a nation's pain," wrote one commentator in the Guardian.

He added: "Once their disappointment has diminished, England should reflect with satisfaction on the part they played in one of the most politically significant Tests in history."

The Daily Mail's correspondent agreed, saying that through his "utterly brilliant, match-winning and history-making century,"

Tendulkar had achieved something that was "far, far bigger than cricket".

"It simply does not matter that England had lost a Test they should have won," he wrote.

The Telegraph remarked: "England were not disgraced. They could justifiably say they stretched every Indian sinew before conceding defeat. But the Indians wanted it more."

"In the end no one could deny the script-writer who had the favourite son of Mumbai hitting the winning runs in a record-breaking run chase and registering a hundred," it said.

"And after all that's happened, who would begrudge them that?"

However, former England batsman Geoffrey Boycott wrote in the Telegraph that the defeat was "still a kick in the guts" that "all the upbeat talk in the world will not cover up".

The Times said Kevin Pietersen must adapt for the second and final Test of the series, starting Friday, along with the rest of the team warning that early fears he would, tactically, not be up to the job of captain looked justified.

But it too sought to put the situation into context.

"Now that it is over, and has been lost in such naive fashion, a few people may need reminding that this was only a game and both teams deserved credit simply for turning up," the newspapers said.

Captaincy not on Malik's mind

CRICINFO, undated

Shoaib Malik on Tuesday said he is not weighed down by thoughts about the future of his captaincy, a decision on which will be taken by the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) in the next two weeks.

Malik chose to instead focus on his performance within the team. "For me the more important thing than captaincy is how I perform for my team as one of its members," Malik said after leading Punjab Stallions to a win against the NWFP Panthers in the Pentangular one-day tournament in Karachi.

Malik was appointed captain following Pakistan's first-round exit from the World Cup in 2007. He led them to the final of the Twenty20 World Cup in September that year but that was followed by Test series defeats against South Africa and India.

His next major win came at the Kityly Cup in June this year, in the face of immense pressure to hold him accountable for Pakistan's string of failures. But Pakistan didn't make the Asia Cup that followed at home.

Malik's stint as captain also coincided with security concerns in Pakistan which forced the International Cricket Council to postpone the Champions Trophy, prompted Australia to push their tour to 2009 and put India's tour in January next year in doubt; Pakistan did not play any Tests in 2008. Malik hoped 2009 would be a better year.

"We have Australia coming here and then several tours and the Champions Trophy at home. I'm confident that the team will do well in 2009."

Vodafone ends ECB relation

AFP, London

Mobile phone firm Vodafone announced Tuesday they would not be renewing their sponsorship of the England cricket team when their current deal expires in 13 months.

The telecommunications company, who have sponsored England for 12 years, will end their backing following the tour of South Africa in January 2010.

England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) commercial director John Perera said in a statement: "ECB and Vodafone have enjoyed some notable achievements, both on and off the pitch during this long and successful relationship."

"We fully respect their decision and look forward to working with Vodafone over the next twelve months, in what promises to be the start of another exciting and momentous chapter for the England cricket team."

"This however provides a wonderful opportunity for a new partner to come in to English cricket."

Vodafone's Ian Shepherd added: "As part of an ongoing strategic review of our sponsorship portfolio, we have decided not to renew this sponsorship agreement."

"We remain fully committed to the successful conclusion of the sponsorship at the end of the winter tour of South Africa and we look forward to an exciting summer ahead with the Ashes."

Vodafone's decision was announced the day after England's six-wicket loss in Chennai in the first of their two-Test series against India.

Onus on pacers

CRICINFO, undated

Dale Steyn and his fast-bowling colleagues have attracted all the attention but both teams have taken a conservative approach by leaning towards including a spinner on the bouncy WACA pitch.

However, while Jason Krejza will definitely play and Paul Harris is almost certain, the bulk of the early work in Perth is likely to fall to pace attacks spearheaded by Steyn and Brett Lee.

Makhaya Ntini is nominally the leader of the South Africa fast-bowling unit but the younger and quicker Steyn and Morne Morkel have been talked up having both enjoyed outstanding success in 2008.

Their biggest trial for the year is about to begin and Ricky Ponting believes it will be hard for the two men, neither of whom has played a Test in Australia, to live up to the hype.

"A lot of the pressure will come back on to them," Ponting said in the lead-up to

Wednesday's first Test. "I've said the last couple of days and to our group in particular, there's been a lot said about their bowlers and as yet they're unproven in Australia. Sure, Steyn's had a great year, 60 Test wickets is a terrific effort. But you've got to do it here, when it counts in the big moments of Test matches. That's what we're gearing up for."

In a rare hint of agreement between the two captains, Graeme Smith conceded that it had been tough for Steyn, 25, to adjust to being viewed as an international superstar after his brilliant year. Smith said Steyn was still developing and he backed his fast man to deal with his success level-headedly.

"Anyone would be slightly affected by the amount of hype that has been around a person," Smith said. "But generally he's quite a calm, chilled-out guy off the field and I think he takes everything in his stride. With the rise to success that he's had over the last year it's something that he's had to learn to deal with, it's become a part of his life."

Steyn, Morkel and Ntini are likely to be backed up by the spinner Harris, although South Africa kept their options open by including the uncapped left-arm fast man Lonwabo Tsotsobe in a 12-man squad to be finalised on the morning of the match. There was no such fence-sitting for Australia, who confirmed Krejza would play his second Test having been picked ahead of Shane Watson.

The attack takes on a fresh look with Krejza and Peter Siddle each playing their second Test after debuting in India. Ponting said with Stuart Clark out injured for the rest of the summer Siddle, 24, had a terrific chance to confirm his place in Australia's fast-bowling future.

"There's a great opportunity for him," Ponting said. "I've said from the start I like a lot about what he does. He's a pretty simple sort of bloke that really likes bowling and having that younger, fresher face around the team at the start of a series like this will be a good thing for us."

Monty lacks practice

CRICINFO, undated

BBC ONLINE, undated

Monty Panesar needs more first-class bowling if he is to test the likes of Sachin Tendulkar, says the England spinner's county coach.

Panesar had figures of 0-105 in the second innings as Tendulkar led India to an epic win in Chennai on Monday.

And Northants head coach David Capel believes Panesar is suffering from a lack of match practice.

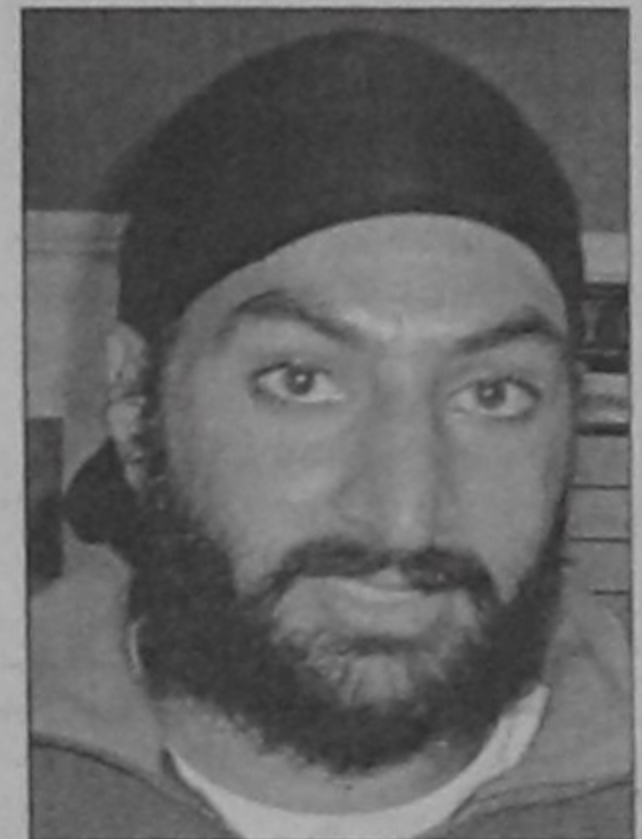
"He needs time to work on his variations in first-class cricket," Capel told BBC Radio 5 Live.

Panesar, 26, made his debut in India two years ago, picking up Tendulkar as his first Test wicket in Nagpur.

He was one of the few England players to emerge relatively unscathed from the 5-0 Ashes thrashing in

Australia last year, but struggled to make an impact in subsequent series against India and Sri Lanka.

"Monty hasn't played for



MONTY PANESAR

some time, he's had the misfortune of having trips cancelled," said Capel.

"I know he's been working on his variations, but if you

haven't played for a long time you stick with the tried and tested when you go into a Test match.

"When people have gone after him he's bowled faster and flatter and that's negative."

"But he hasn't played a lot of cricket and for him to go from working on his variations in the nets to bowling against Sachin Tendulkar in a Test, you can understand him not being as bold."

"He needs time to work on his variations in first-class cricket."

"It's not quite as easy when you're touring with the England team, with fewer first-class matches between Tests, if any, and we haven't seen him much at Northants over the past few years."

"But he was one of the fastest players ever to take 100 wickets and he's won Tests for England in the past and he'll do it again in the future."

Lot at stake at the top

CRICINFO, undated

As well as looking to wrap up the series 2-0, India will look to regain the No. 2 spot in the International Cricket Council (ICC) Test rankings with a win in the second Test against England in Mohali starting Friday.

Having briefly secured the second spot with a 2-0 win against Australia in the Border-Gavaskar Trophy in October-November, they were toppled by South Africa who beat Bangladesh 2-0 in the two-Test series at home, towards the end of last month.

The three points gained will put India above South Africa, who will then have to ensure a series win against Australia, the No. 1 team, in their contest starting Wednesday in Perth, to hold on to second spot.

However, South Africa have the chance to go top if they whitewash Australia 3-0.

Australia have held on to the top spot despite the defeat in India, followed swiftly by a 2-0 series win in the Trans-Tasman Trophy at home to New Zealand. They are currently 13 points clear of South Africa, and 14 of India.

A 3-0 series win at home against South Africa will give them four points and stretch the gap ahead of No. 2 to 21 points. Any series win, in fact, will strengthen their position.

The Australia-South Africa series holds a number of incentives for the players as well. The South African pace duo of Dale Steyn (No. 2) and Makhaya Ntini (No. 4) will look to improve their positions among the top five Test bowlers, given that Australia's Stuart Clark (No. 3) has been ruled out of the first Test. Jacques Kallis will also look to widen the gap between him and Daniel Vettori at No. 2 in the Test all-rounder rankings.

Michael Hussey, currently No. 4 in the Test batsmen rankings, will also look to move up the charts, and narrow the gap at the top. But he will hope that both, West Indies' Shivnarine Chanderpaul (No. 1) and Sri Lanka's Kumar Sangakkara (No. 2) falter this December, in the series away to New Zealand and Bangladesh respectively.

Maintain standard of Tests: Clarke

CRICINFO, undated

AFP, London

English cricket's leading administrator has called for a reduction in the volume of Test cricket in order to ensure standards in the five-day format are maintained.

England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) chairman Giles Clarke added the International Cricket Council (ICC) had to get the 2011 World Cup in Asia "right" after branding last year's edition in the Caribbean as "unsuccessful in virtually every feasible aspect".

Clarke, in an interview with January's issue of the Wisden Cricketer magazine, was asked to predict where cricket would be in five years' time.

He replied: "The game has to decide what the ICC does, what is its role."

"It has to determine its calendar over a lengthy period. Four years is not practical. At the same time we have to respect quality."

"Test cricket is the summit of the game and it must be played by the best countries. There is no doubt that when Test cricket is good, it is won-

derful."

Questioned as to whether that meant fewer but better Tests, Clarke answered: "Yes. That is the real test of the player in mental and physical strength -- the tension and excitement we feel as a series develops."

The ECB, under Clarke, have recently signed leading nations South Africa and India to five-match 'icon' status Test series with England to go alongside their Ashes campaigns against Australia.

Former Somerset chairman Clarke, turning his attention to 50-over cricket, delivered a scathing assessment of the 2007 World Cup in the West Indies.

A tournament widely regarded, at some two months in duration, as being too long was also criticised for poor attendances and pricing local cricket fans out of the market for tickets.

The final in Barbados ended in farce when, after five of world cricket's most experienced officials between them failed to realise enough overs had elapsed for Australia to be declared the winners against Sri Lanka, the

players were ordered back onto the field to complete the match in near-total darkness.

"We have to care about the World Cup as a major event," Clarke stressed. "The 2007 World Cup was unsuccessful in virtually every feasible aspect."

Looking ahead to the next edition, due to take place in three years' time in India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh, he added: "The 2011 World Cup is a huge thing for the ICC because they have to get it right."

England's 'icon' agreement does not cover the current series in India, where Kevin Pietersen's side were beaten by six wickets in the first of a two-Test campaign in Chennai on Monday.

Concerns have been repeatedly expressed about the viability of Bangladesh, so far restricted to short series, as a Test nation. They lost seven of their eight Tests this year, while a draw with New Zealand owed much to rain.

Bangladesh have now lost 50 of their total 57 Tests, 33 by an innings, with their sole victory coming against fellow strugglers Zimbabwe.

Shakib's timely ton

FROM PAGE 17 damage as the former picked up three wickets and Robuil took two.

Riyad was batting on 79 and Nadif Chowdhury accompanied him with 26.

CHITTAGONG-BARISAL

Talha Jubair produced a little whirlwind after Rokibul's patient effort to take the match away from the home side. Pacer Tariq Aziz and left-arm Mohammad Younus equally shared eight wickets but their efforts were not enough for Chittagong to take control.

Number ten Talha smashed four boundaries and three big sixes to make 45 off 31 deliveries and Rokibul contributed 77 off 112 balls with the help of nine fours and two sixes as Barisal were all out for 266 after resuming the day on 93-2.

Chasing 313 runs, the home side lost their openers Masumudowla and Nafis Iqbal with the score on 36 and finished the day on 63 for 2 with Rezaul Karim (11) and Tariq Ahmed (15) still at the crease.

BRIEF SCORES

KHULNA: First Innings 355 and Second Innings

(overnight 146-5) 352 all out in 77.4 overs (Sadat 26, Kayes 14, Sahagir 19, Tushar 35, Shakib 129, Nahidul 0, Anas 90, Zia 8, Dollar 2, Salim 7 not out, Robuil 9, extras 9; Shahadat 1-65, Mahbubul 2-58, Arafat 1-60, Riyad 3-47, Marshal 1-30, Mehrab 2-37).

DHAKA: First Innings (overnight 38-2) 181-9 dec and Second Innings 204-5 in 43 overs (Javed 76, Anamul 4, Marhsal 10, Ashraful 0, Mehrab 0, Riyad 79 not out, Nadif 26 not out, extras 9; Zia 3-37, Robuil 2-60).

CHITTAGONG: First Innings (overnight 52-1) 198 and Second Innings 63-2 in 23 overs (Masum 19, Nafis 10, Rezaul 11 not out, Tariq 15 not out, extras 8; Tariqul 1-17, Salahuddin 1-9).

RAJSHAHI: First Innings (overnight 56-5) 264.

SYLHET: First Innings 1-0 in 4 overs.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down words.

Cryptogram puzzle grid with letters and numbers.

CRYPTOQUIP
GDRVOQD UED WKI GVJDA
XVQ BDAF QNRJ WC ENQ
ROAADHU XVFQ. ED IDRNIDI
UW UOAH WBDA V HDX KWVC.
Yesterday's Cryptquip: FINDING IT EXTREMELY EASY TO SUCCESSFULLY HAIL TAXIS, I'D SAY MY BROTHER HAS THE GIFT OF CAB.
Today's Cryptquip Clue: W equals O