

West Indies fast bowler Jerome Taylor stretches in vain to stop the ball on the second day of the second Test against New Zealand in Napier yesterday.

One of Dravid's most major centuries

PTI, Mohali

Breathing easy after a career-reviving ton, Rahul Dravid Saturday said that the century he scored against England here would rank among the most significant knocks of his career.

"It's a quite significant knock, considering the form I was in coming into the match. Its one of the most significant hundreds I scored and I now just hope we go on to win this match," a visibly relieved Dravid told reporters here.

Dravid snapped the long string of poor shows with a knock of 136 and the right-hander said he felt relieved to get a huge monkey off his back.

"I'm definitely relieved and it's nice to be contributing again. It has been a tough year for me, nothing has been easy. It's nice to make important contributions," said the former captain who ran into a bad patch soon after the home series against South Africa.

True to his nature, Dravid's was a muted celebration as he just raised the bat and shook hands with Gautam Gambhir. He didn't even take off the helmet.

Asked if that was to hide his emotion or to make any statement, Dravid said, "I didn't try to make any statement. I was definitely happy and relieved. I guess I'm bit old and wise, I don't jump around even when I'm excited. It was a combination of both relief and joy."

McIntosh, Flynn pull NZ

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that have dogged the side in recent years.

By tea, they had raised the score to a patient 74 for one after 41 overs. The pairing lifted the pace to add 63 runs in 23 overs before Flynn fell in a rain and bad light-disrupted final session.

It was a lazy, defensive stroke from a batsman who was backing up from a 95 in the drawn first Test in Dunedin last week.

After surviving his early chance, McIntosh settled down to play a sound innings, waiting for the right ball to hit.

He reached his 50 driving West Indies captain Chris Gayle to the boundary, one of only eight boundaries from the 210 deliveries he has faced.

Gayle had called on all his attacking options, rotating the ball through six bowlers, but only the 26-year-old Edwards was able to make his presence felt, capturing both wickets.

Although there is promise of spin later in the Test, the McLean Park wicket remained batsman-friendly through the second day and the visitors' total of 307 appears well within New Zealand's reach.

It was a surprise that most of the West Indies batsmen succumbed so cheaply while Chanderpaul remained untroubled.

Resuming the day at 258 for six, the West Indies innings lasted just over an hour and produced a further 49 runs.

O'Brien was New Zealand's star as he bagged his maiden five-wicket haul in Test

cricket, taking the remaining four wickets to fall.

He removed first Test century-maker Jerome Taylor for 17 and Suleiman Benn for a duck in the same over, and he followed with the wicket of Daren Powell for six, all caught by wicketkeeper Brendon McCullum.

The pace bowler ended the West Indies innings when he trapped Edwards in front with a slow yorker.

Chanderpaul was left unbeaten on 126 with his 20th Test century lasting four hours and 22 minutes and including 11 fours and three sixes.

In the process, the 34-year-old left-hander lifted his Test average to 50.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at stumps on the second day of the second Test between New Zealand and the West Indies at McLean Park on Saturday.

WEST INDIES: First innings (overnight 258 for 6)

Gayle c McCullum b O'Brien 34
Chattergoon c How b Vettori 13
Sarwan c McCullum b Patel 11
Marshall c Ryder b O'Brien 6
Chanderpaul not out 126
Nash c Flynn b Franklin 74
Ramdin b Vettori 6
Taylor c McCullum b O'Brien 18
Benn c McCullum b O'Brien 0
Powell c McCullum b O'Brien 6
Edwards lbw b O'Brien 0
Extras: (lb-5, w-1, nb-7) 13
Total: (All out in 107 overs) 307
Fall of wickets: 1-43, 2-54, 3-63, 4-74, 5-237, 6-257, 7-279, 8-279, 9-299, 10-307.

Bowler O M R W
Franklin 19 2 77 1
Mills 12 4 29 0

Patel 25 12 41 1
O'Brien 26 6 75 6
Vettori 22 4 71 2
Ryder 3 0 9 0
NEW ZEALAND: First innings
McIntosh not out 62
How c Chattergoon b Edwards 12
Flynn c & b Edwards 57
Taylor not out 4
Extras: (lb-8, nb-2) 10
Total: (For 2 wks in 68 overs) 145
To bat: Ryder, McCullum, Franklin, Vettori, Mills, O'Brien, Patel.
Fall of wicket: 1-19, 2-137.

ECB may not

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England in May 2010 for two Tests and three ODIs.

Bangladesh, who were given Test status in 2000, have only one win in 57 Tests, that too against Zimbabwe. Though they have come close to upsetting Pakistan, Australia, South Africa and New Zealand, they have mostly struggled to avoid heavy defeat.

A mass defection of players to the ICL recently has also severely depleted their resource pool. With India, cricket's current financial centre, already not keen on hosting them, Clarke's comments suggest they won't soon be touring the spiritual home of cricket, which will only intensify the scrutiny on their Test status.

Sattar Textiles sticks with tradition

UNB, Dhaka

Sattar Textile Mills Ltd again came forward to sponsor the Rahmatganj MFS football team now playing in the ongoing CityCell 2nd B League.

The announcement was made at a press conference organized by Rahmatganj Muslim Friends Society at the BFF Bhawan yesterday.

Rahmatganj MFS came to the limelight in the ongoing B League beating holders Dhaka Abahani Limited and Dhaka Mohammedan SC.

Addressing the press conference, Managing Director of Sattar Textile Mills Aminur Rashid said: "We are closely associated with Rahmatganj Club since 75 years. We like to continue it in future too."

BFF Senior Vice President Abdus Salam Murshedi, Manager of Sattar Textile Mills Estafizur Rahman, and Rahmatganj MFS vice president Haji Kabir, general secretary Haji Tipu Sultan and football secretary M Salahuddin Kala were also present.

Zimbabwe

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against Sri Lanka A in November.

The 23-year-old Mutizwa, on the other hand, has a little more experience with 191 first-class runs at 23.87. He may eventually end up as a backup wicketkeeper to Tatenda Taibu, a role similar to Chakabva's in the Sri Lanka series where he did not play a single game.

Taibu was included in the squad, despite being at the centre of a dispute with Zimbabwe Cricket (ZC), after a Harare court had ordered ZC to submit documents concerning its payroll, sponsorship deals and ICC grants following claims of financial mismanagement made by him. Taibu was earlier facing charges of assault on ZC's general finance manager, Esther Lupepe, in October. The ZC however, has rubbished the claims and the case has been deferred till February 6.

Sean Williams, who quit international cricket this year citing frustration but returned to play in the Sri Lanka series, has also been retained.

Zimbabwe, despite their recent problems and flatlining form, will take heart from the fact that they have a 18-15 win-loss record against Bangladesh, who are coming off a 3-0 hiding away to South Africa in their previous ODI series.

In addition to the warm-up match against the Bangladesh Academy from January 6-8, they will also be playing a one-day tri-series involving Sri Lanka as the third team. They will then take on Bangladesh in three one-dayers in Dhaka scheduled for January 19, 21 and 23.

SQUAD

Prosper Utseya (captain), Hamilton Masakadza, Tatenda Taibu, Ray Price, Sean Williams, Stuart Matsikenyeri, Elton Chigumbura, Vusi Sibanda, Tawanda Mupariwa, Keith Dabengwa, Ed Rainsford, Graeme Cremer, Chris Mpofu, Forster Mutizwa, Malcolm Waller.

Mushfiq

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much optimistic about the series and hoped that it would be better than the last two series against New Zealand and South Africa.

"We want to play good positive cricket in the series. I think we already proved that we have got the ability as a team to play good cricket but the problem is that all of the departments like batting, bowling could not click simultaneously. Anything can happen if our bowling and batting clicked together," observed Mushfiq.

Though many have questioned about his batting lower down the order, the 21-year old lad from Bogra said that he has hardly thought about it rather his main focus is to serve the team first.

"For me team comes first. I am ready to bat at any position. The main thing is to contribute something for the team," he responded when asked whether he would love to play at the top order.

Mushfiq was also not ready to think too much about what kind of wicket in the home series against Sri Lanka would suit him.

"Whatever the wicket is, both teams will get the same benefit, we are not concerned about the wicket," he said.

Qadir expects strong show against SL

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

Abdul Qadir, the Pakistan chief selector and former leg-spinner, has said the national team will turn in a strong performance in the Sri Lanka series despite not playing any Tests in the last year.

"We are aiming to raise a strong team for the series against Sri Lanka," Qadir told the News on Friday. "Our aim is to help Pakistan gain a place among the top-two Test teams and want to start taking steps towards that direction with this series."

Qadir, who was appointed the chief selector last month, said he had had sufficient time to assess the talent in Pakistan. "We've been watching each and every domestic match and are now in a position to even select a strong [Pakistan] B team."

After a year in which Pakistan's fast bowlers Shoaib Akhtar and Mohammad Asif have faced disciplinary bans and key middle-order batsman Mohammad Yousuf joined the unofficial ICL,

Qadir said maintaining team unity was a priority.

"I've talked to Intikhab Alam [Pakistan's coach] and offered my support to promote unity in the team. We can sit down with the players and give them pep talks because team spirit is very important to ensure best possible results."

He was confident the players would perform well if treated with respect. "Take for example the case of Shoaib Akhtar. We made him captain of Federal Areas [in the Pentangular one-day championship] and he has responded really well. He has seldom performed with so much heart in recent times."

Shoaib is currently challenging an 18-month ban from cricket and a fine of Rs seven million (around 88,000 dollars) in the Lahore High Court for allegedly repeatedly violating the players' code of conduct.

Three other areas that Qadir felt Pakistan needed to work on are: the openers, middle-order batting, and spin. "Yousuf's exit has left a big hole in our middle-order and it's very important that we find a good replacement."

Dar blasted down under

Cricket

PTI, Melbourne

Pakistani umpire Aleem Dar was roundly criticised for his howler of a decision when he gave struggling Australian opener Matthew Hayden out caught and bowled during the first Test against South Africa in Perth on Friday.

Dar raised his finger when Hayden prodded forward to Dale Steyn and the ball popped back to the bowler. Television replays showed the ball had clearly thudded into Hayden's pad, going nowhere near his broad blade.

Richie Benaud, who was commenting, described it as one of the most shocking umpiring howlers of modern times.

"That was one of the more astonishing decisions I have ever seen," Benaud was quoted as saying by Daily Telegraph. The newspaper said Dar's decision could have effectively ended the broad-shouldered Australian opener's career.

"Umpire Aleem Dar lifted his finger and effectively poked it through Matthew Hayden's bleeding heart in the disgraceful blunder that may have ended a great Test career. Thousands of Australians stood incredulous in front of their televisions. Everyone from mere mortals to cricket greats were left in disbelief," it said.

"The staggering blunder left Hayden's extraordinary 8524-run Test career in danger of being extinguished as the big Queenslander now has just 48 Test runs at 9.6 this summer. The furious Perth crowd vented their anger at Dar - the man who seems never to have a hair out of place -- as resounding boos rang across the WACA while Hayden wandered off in disgust.

"He (Dar) must face the sack after this latest botch-up," the newspaper said of Dar who was one of the umpires who stood during the farcical scenes of Australia's World Cup final win in the West Indies last year.

Rahul back with a bang

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His effort will silence critics who had demanded his exclusion from the Test team after he managed just 342 runs in his last 10 matches at an average of 19.

Dravid, the 131-Test veteran who turns 36 next month, said he was not unduly perturbed by the criticism.

"To be honest with myself, I did expect some scrutiny since I was not scoring runs," he said. "That goes with the territory, but I knew I was just one innings away from making a big one."

"I may not have been getting the runs but I was hitting the ball well in the nets."

"It was not easy to bat on this wicket. The overcast conditions meant the ball was swinging and one just had to be patient and graft the runs."

"I was lucky to have Gautam at the other end. He is in terrific form and that helped take some pressure off me."

The 27-year-old Gambhir moved past 1,000 runs in the

calendar year with a flick off Collingwood to become the fourth Indian after Sachin Tendulkar, Venkatsai Laxman and Sehwag to achieve the feat in 2008.

The only other instance in Test history when four batsmen from a country scored 1,000 runs in one year was when England's Kevin Pietersen, Paul Collingwood, Andrew Strauss and Alastair Cook did it in 2006.

England off-spinner Graeme Swann, who finished with three wickets, said the outcome would hinge on how the Indian spinners were tackled.

"To keep them down to 450 has brought us back in the game because at one stage we did not know where the next wicket was coming from," said Swann.

"This wicket is not the ideal batting surface. A lot will depend on how our batsmen negotiate the spinners."

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at stumps on the

Div I chess

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Biman maintained their solo lead in the Dutch-Bangla Bank First Division Chess League when they beat Pritam Prism Chess Club 2.5-1.5 in the sixth round at the federation hall-room yesterday.

Biman improved their tally to 20.5 points while Destiny 2000 Limited followed the leaders with 18.5 points and Leonine Chess Club was in third position with 16.5 points.

Destiny 2000 beat Madharipur Chess Club 3.5-0.5 points and Leonine beat Sultana Kamal Smriti Pathagar 2.5-1.5 points.

Prasanna

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"We don't really know but we'll see after the physiotherapy and take a decision tomorrow [Sunday]," said Sangakkara.

But maybe Sangakkara would not be needed after all if the weather stays this way. If the forecast is anything to go by, the match in Savar could well be a limited affair.

Sangakkara expressed his surprise at the weather, saying, "It has been a bit strange coming from Sri Lanka to here but we got to get ahead."

"As long as the wickets are good and the grounds are ready to play, I don't think it'll matter much," he added.

The three-day practice match will be succeeded by the first Test that begins on December 26.

"I think every series is different. No series is easy for us and we will take it as another Test match. We have to be up to the mark everyday, go out there and perform," said the veteran of 76 Tests.

Rivals worry

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their last round match against Sylhet where most of the game had to be called off due to the murkiness at their home turf.

It is likely that the same situation will occur in today's matches as the whole country is under a cold spell with long spans of gloom throughout the day.

Rajshahi have notched up more wins than Barisal, but their only loss also came against the latter. They are now currently on 96 points, just one behind Barisal, who would be eyeing their maiden title in the country's lone first-class competition.

POINTS TABLE

Team	M	W	L	D	Pts
Barisal	9	4	0	5	97
Rajshahi	9	5	1	3	96
Khulna	9	3	3	3	76
Dhaka	9	2	3	4	73
Chittagong	9	1	3	5	61
Sylhet	9	0	5	4	56

Smith keeps SA in hunt

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There was incredibly useful support from Amla, a player who seems to lift the mood of his captain. Nineteen runs came in the 14.3 overs Smith shared with Neil McKenzie, who edged Johnson on 10, but as soon as Amla stepped into his back-foot pushes the rate lifted. The result was a 153-run stand that rattled the Australians until both batsmen departed in three overs.

Smith allowed only a few moments of extravagance before tea, including a straight drive and a pull off Peter Siddle for boundaries, but he extended his range after the break and blew to his century in 138 balls. This was Smith's 18th hundred -- his first against Australia -- and when he reached it with consecutive cuts for four off Johnson he looked to the sky.

On 7 Smith earned 6000 Test runs in his 73rd match and was averaging a neat 50.00. South Africa would have liked him to quadruple his mean in this match to make the result safe, but Johnson slipped through with a slower ball for a well-earned lbw. The decision gave Johnson his first ten-wicket haul and a tense conclusion to the day ensued when Amla departed.

Three years ago South Africa batted more than a day to save the game. This time a win or a loss are the likely results and will depend on how Jacques Kallis and AB de Villiers (11) re-start on the fifth morning.

Kallis charged 22 runs in two overs late in the day to walk off with 33 after surviving a severe examination from Johnson and Lee. Johnson,

who took 2 for 56, will have a big say on Sunday after another fierce evening spell while Australia will hope for more impact from Krejza's off-spin.

The day had not gone well for South Africa before they batted, with it taking them a session to prise the three remaining Australian wickets. Haddin orchestrated a fine lower-order performance and narrowly missed a century with a clever and brutal 94.

Australia started the day on top but by lunch they were in a commanding position, adding 91 before being dismissed for 319. Haddin blasted their

advantage past 400 with a six to long-on from Paul Harris and next ball repeated the result with a smooth strike over long-off. He immediately followed it with a four straight down the ground, but later in the over was stumped aiming for his hundred.

The strong showing of the Australian tail also included Krejza picking up 32, Johnson 21 and Siddle hanging around for 4. Krejza, who was another victim of de Villiers' outstanding catching, left following a 79-run partnership that turned the game by forcing South Africa's chase into record-breaking territory. Smith gave them hope, but at

least one of his teammates will have to match his substance.

SCOREBOARD

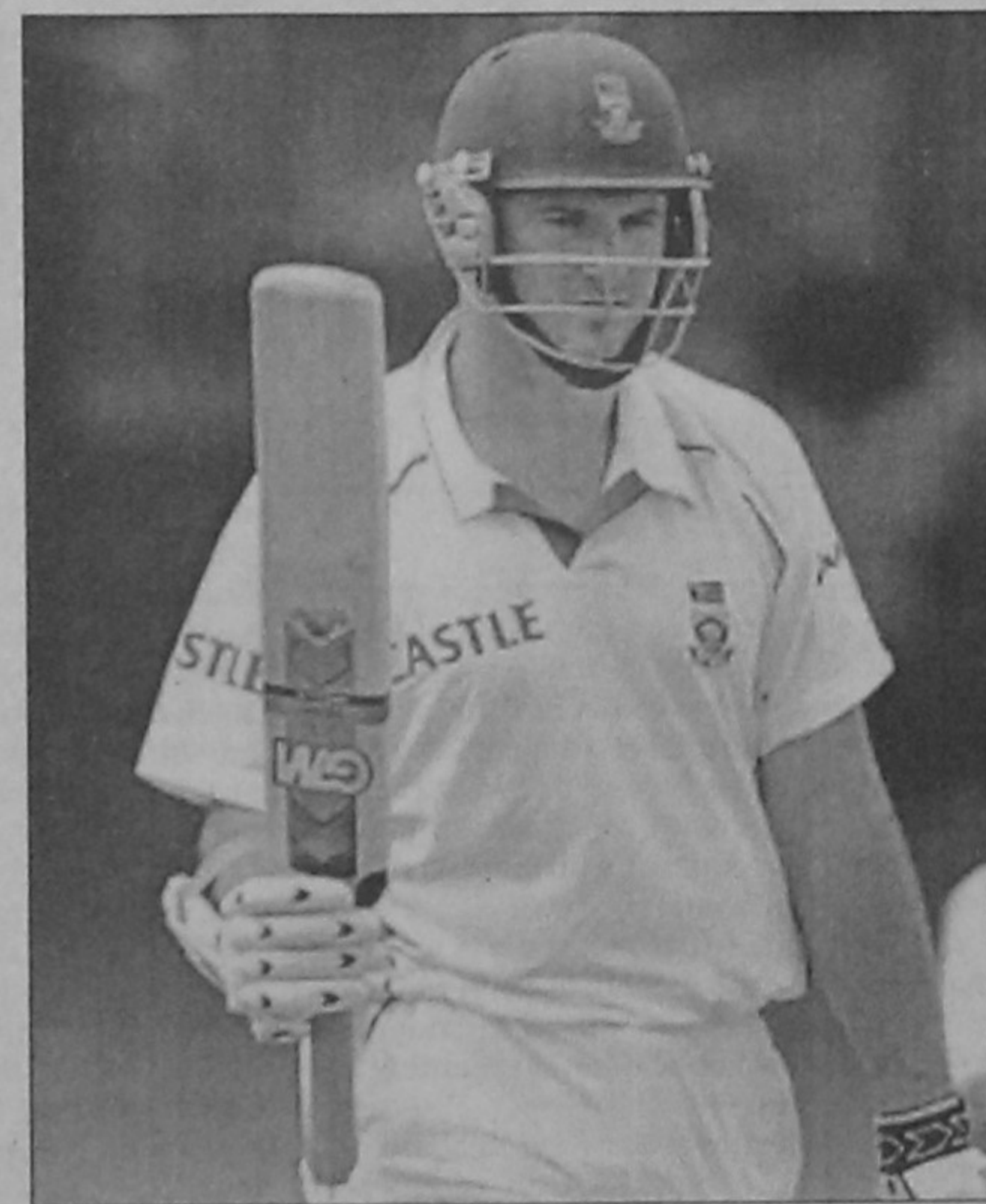
Scoreboard at stumps on the fourth day of the first Test between Australia and South Africa at the Western Australia Cricket Association ground in Perth on Saturday:

AUSTRALIA: First innings 375
SOUTH AFRICA: First innings 281
AUSTRALIA: Second innings (overnight 228 for 7)

Hayden c & b Steyn 4
Katie c Boucher b Kallis 37
Ponting c Boucher b Harris 32
Hussey b Ntini 8
Clarke c Kallis b Steyn 25
Symonds c Smith b Harris 37
Haddin st Boucher b Harris 94
Lee c De Villiers b Kallis 5
Krejza c De Villiers b Kallis 32
Krejza c Kallis b Morkel 21
Siddle not out 40
Extras: (b-4, lb-7, w-2, nb-7) 24
Total: (All out in 97 overs) 319
Fall of wickets: 1-25, 2-59, 3-88, 4-88, 5-148, 6-157, 7-162, 8-241, 9-278, 10-319.

Bowler O M R W
Steyn 19 3 81 2
Ntini 21 2 76 1
Harris 27 3 85 3
Kallis 14 4 24 3
Morkel 16 4 42 1
SOUTH AFRICA: Second innings
Smith lbw b Johnson 108
McKenzie c Haddin b Johnson 10
Amla c Haddin b Lee 53
Kallis not out 33
De Villiers not out 11
Extras: (b-4, lb-5, w-1, nb-2) 12
Total: (For 3 wks in 64 overs) 227
To bat: Duminy, Boucher, Morkel, Ntini, Steyn, Harris.
Fall of wickets: 1-19, 2-172, 3-179.

Bowler O M R W
Lee 16 3 40 1
Johnson 19 3 56 2
Siddle 14 0 56 0
Krejza 15 1 66 0



GRAEME SMITH ...108

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS	44 Comedian	3 Shade	23 Tooth
1 Automaton, for short	45 Caesar	36 provider	3 tissues
4 Sestas	46 Pepé Le Pew, e.g.	4 "You cheated!"	25 Soybean
8 Do as you're told	50 Having a huge appetite	5 Mimic	28 Soybean
12 "—Town"	55 Brooch	6 Zero	28 Belge
13 October birthstone	56 Pizzeria	7 Cabbage	27 Vail
14 Base runner's goal	57 Mediocre	8 Buckeye	28 equipment
15 Expert	58 Inseparable	9 Hallow	29 Lapidary's
16 Persistent	59 Greet	10 Ostrich's cousin	29 wares
18 Wheat	60 Bum	11 "Of course"	30 Agar
20 Court	61 Fresh	12 Massachusetts	30 source
21 Freeway exit	DOWN	13 cape	31 Member-
24 Knighted women	1 Silthery	19 Joan	31 ship
28 Courteous	2 "That conversation"	20 of	35 Cuts
32 Shaving mishap	3 Shade	22 Bovine	38 Mad
33 Conquer, for one	4 "You cheated!"	23 conversation	40 Annoy
34 Portrayals	5 Mimic	24	42 ches-
36 Lanka	6 Zero	25	42 -tacle
37 Creche	7 Cabbage	26	45 Plaster
39 Roomy	8 Buckeye	27	47 Atop
41 Viewpoint	9 Hallow	28	48 Morning
43 Use a teaspoon	10 Ostrich's cousin	29	49 Recogn-
	11 "Of course"	30	49 ized
	12 Massachusetts	31	50 Solemn
	13 Member-	32	51 Eggs
	13 ship	33	52 Gun the
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