

# Vaas bids Tests bye

**Cricket**

CRICINFO, undated

Chaminda Vaas, Sri Lanka's most successful fast bowler, ended his Test career during an emotional farewell at the SSC after the third and final Test against Pakistan ended in a draw with the hosts winning the series 2-0.

Vaas, a 111-Test veteran, was given a standing ovation by the spectators, who stayed behind after the end of the match, when he was presented with a memento and one million rupees by Sri Lanka Cricket chairman DS de Silva.

"This is an emotional time for me. I have played international cricket for the last 16 years with pride and performed at the best of my ability," Vaas said. "I can confidently say that I have given my 100 per cent to my country. In return cricket has made me what I am today. I am grateful for all that I have received. I've always adopted a non-confrontational and non-controversial approach in my Test career and I do not intend doing things differently today."

Vaas said he began his Test career at a time when Sri Lanka was nowhere in the top league and was proud to have contributed to his country's progress. "After 15 years Sri Lanka has made giant strides and is able to rub shoulders with the best. While many people have contributed to this transformation, I am proud to have played my own little part in this process," he said. "I may not have been the most talented cricketer to play for Sri Lanka but I've worked hard on my game and was able to produce good results. There is no substitute for hard work."

While thanking the past captains he had the privilege

of playing under, Vaas singled out Arjuna Ranatunga as one who had a strong influence on his career. "He was such a strong leader and had a great influence in me," Vaas also said current captain Kumar Sangakkara was already showing signs of becoming 'a great captain' in the short time he had been in charge.

Vaas also thanked the support staff for enabling him to play international cricket continuously without any serious injury.

"No one forced me to retire from Test cricket. I am thankful that I got the opportunity to play in my last Test. This is the best time to retire from Test cricket and concentrate on ODIs and Twenty20s because the young fast bowlers who are emerging are doing pretty well."

Vaas said taking 14 wickets in a Test at the SSC against Brian Lara's West Indies in 2001 was the most memorable moment of his career. He picked Wasim Akram as his role model and chose Sachin Tendulkar and Brian Lara as the two most difficult batsmen to bowl at in world cricket.

Vaas said that if he was to start his Test career all over again he would prefer to be a batsman and lamented his lack of focus on his batting in the early part of his career. "I realised how important batting was only in the latter part of my career and I enjoyed batting in the last four to five years."

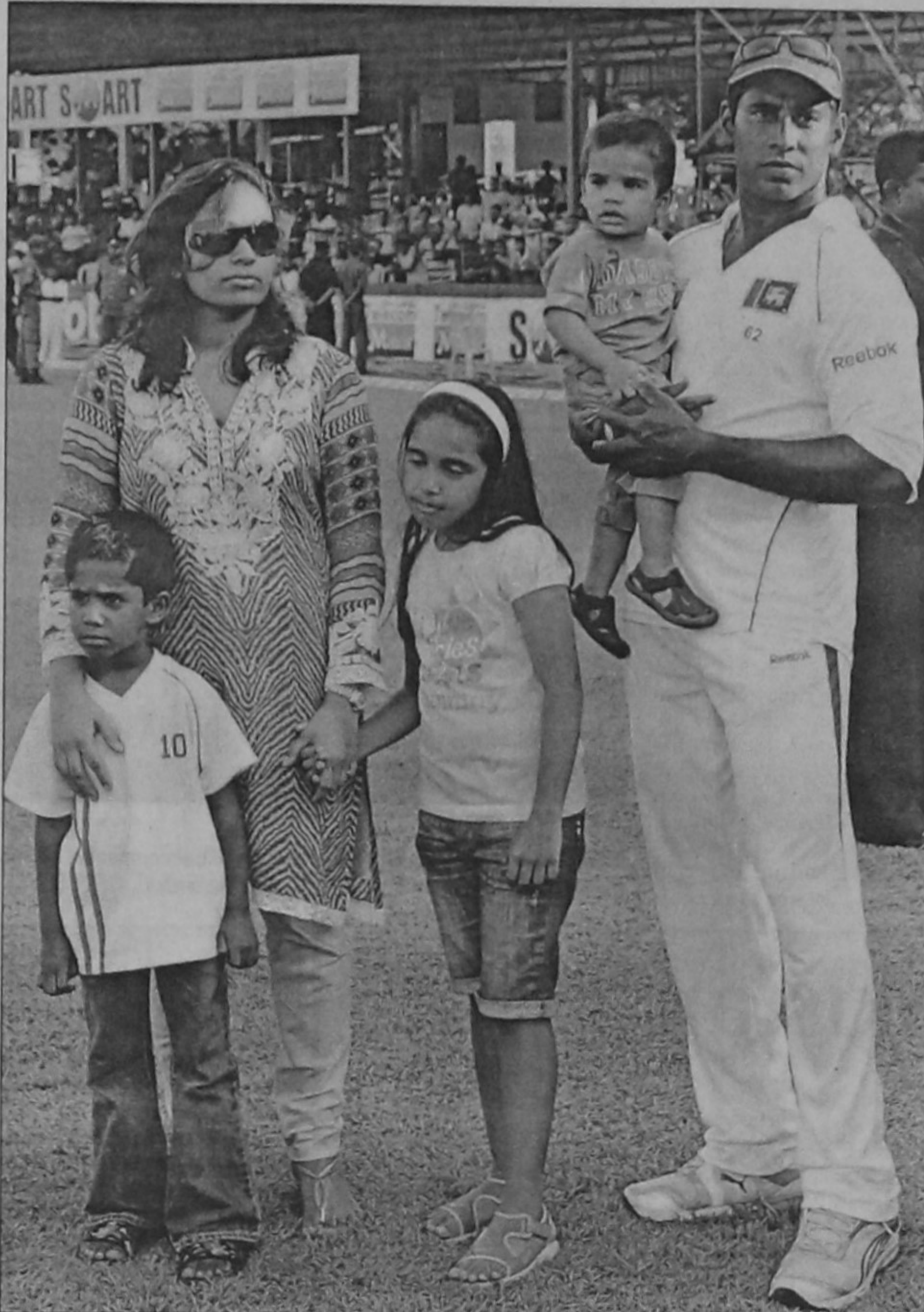
Bowling in tandem with Muttiah Muralitharan, Vaas said, was a privilege. "I should say that most of Murali's success was due to me bowling at the other end and keeping things very tight. It was an honour to play with such a world-class bowler."

Having been overlooked for the ODI series against Pakistan, Vaas said that he would fight his way back into

the team. "I haven't played ODI cricket for 11 months and during that time all the young

fast bowlers have played very well and grabbed the opportunities with both hands. I am

going to work hard to fight for my place. I'll be back very soon."



Sri Lanka fast bowler Chaminda Vaas is seen with his family after the presentation ceremony at the end of the third Test against Pakistan at the Sinhalese Sports Club ground in Colombo yesterday. This was the last Test for the legendary seamer who wraps up a glittering career of 111 Tests in which he took 355 wickets and scored 3089 runs.

## Hussey's word of caution

**Cricket**

AFP, Northampton

Mike Hussey has warned Australia not to get carried away by Kevin Pietersen's withdrawal from England's Ashes campaign.

Pietersen will miss the remaining three Tests of the series after surgery on an Achilles tendon injury. However, while Hussey knows the news is a blow to England, the Australia batsman has no intention of writing off Andrew Strauss's side.

Hussey, who captains Australia in their three-day match against his old county Northamptonshire this weekend, believes Pietersen's likely replacement Ian Bell has enough talent to help make it hard for Ricky Ponting's team to claw back the 1-0 series deficit.

"It's going to be a big loss to the England team. Pietersen has obviously been a quality batsman for a long period of time and they're definitely going to miss him," Hussey said.

"It is a boost for us. He's played well for a long time, and done it against Australia, and is probably the lynchpin of that batting order. Not having him there has to be a plus for us."

"But they've got some pretty good replacements who can come in and do a very good job and can score hundreds in Test matches -- so we can't think it is going to be any easier."

"If you lose one player, it doesn't necessarily mean you're going to win or lose the series from then on."

"Certainly in the England team, as in ours, they have had different blokes contributing."

Pietersen is clearly a more dynamic player than Bell and the Warwickshire batsman struggled against Australia in 2005. But he will be playing on his home ground if he does get called up for next week's Edgbaston Test and

Hussey is full of praise for the 27-year-old.

"Bell is a quality player, who has played very well for England before. We're going to give him the same respect we give all the England batsmen," he said.

There is no shortage of Australian respect either for England's other injury-hit star Andrew Flintoff, especially after his man-of-the-match performance and maiden Lord's five-wicket haul last week.

Hussey concedes there was little Australia could have done to resist Flintoff's relentless attack.

"He had a great Test match at Lord's, bowled brilliantly throughout," he said.

"I don't know if we could have done a hell of a lot different against him. But we hope it's our turn to get on top of him in the next one."

Australia themselves have form as well as fitness concerns to address before Edgbaston. Fast bowler Brett Lee's chances of being available in time after his side strain seem slim, and he will play no part against Northamptonshire.

His pace partner Mitchell Johnson is fit but not firing, and it will be high on Hussey's brief -- in the absence of the rested Ponting -- to give the left-armers every opportunity to establish some much-needed bowling rhythm at Northampton.

Hussey knows Australia had only themselves to blame for the Lord's defeat but expects they will get back on track quickly.

"It's pretty simple stuff. We didn't play well enough for long periods of time," he said. "That's what we've prided ourselves on, in the drawn first Test in Cardiff and the wins against South Africa."

"We need to get back to doing those basics very, very well. If we can do that I think we can put England under a lot of pressure and I think we can beat them."

## MU overcome Seoul

**Football**

AFP, Seoul

English Premier League champions Manchester United saw off a determined FC Seoul here Friday night, taking a see-sawing exhibition match 3-2 with a brace of second-half goals.

With the scores levelled at 2-2 it was left to second-half substitute Dimitar Berbatov to save the Premier League champions' blushes.

Darron Gibson's sharp cross set up the game-winning header from close range in the 65th minute, as Berbatov redirected the ball inside the near post past the Seoul keeper Kim Ho-Jun.

The home side had opened the scoring in the 23rd, with Kim Seung-Yong's curling cross from the right finding the charging Dejan Damjanovic, who squeezed past two defenders and deftly slotted past the helpless Tomasz Kuszczak.

United equalised eight minutes later when an unmarked Wayne Rooney soared to convert a John O'Shea cross from the right, just out of reach of the diving Kim.

Damjanovic put Seoul back in front moments before half-time. A nifty pass from

Lee Seung-Yeoul sent the Serb through alone against Kuszczak, and FC Seoul's leading scorer flicked the ball in over the Polish keeper for the lead. Federico Macheda tied the score again in the 57th when Rooney's through pass from just inside the halfway line set up the 17-year-old, who easily put the ball past the charging Kim.

Berbatov's strike edged United in front and Michael Owen could have put the game beyond doubt but headed wide after diving to redirect Gibson's slow, curving cross from the right in the 73rd.

After going quiet for most of the second half, Seoul pressed for an equaliser but late strikes by Jung Jo-Gook and Ki Sung-Yueng went straight to the United keeper.

Seoul had managed to frustrate United early on by crowding their box but the England champions showed their class in the end.

Park Ji-Sung, United's Korean winger who was the star attraction for much of the crowd, did not start and entered the match in the 73rd minute to deafening applause.

Fans had cheered on and chanted Park's name as the giant screens showed him seated on the bench. United travel to China for their next match on the Asian tour against Hangzhou Greentown Sunday. FC Seoul resume their domestic league play on August 1.

## Langer hailed

AFP, Sydney

Justin Langer was Friday lauded by his peers after claiming the legendary Donald Bradman's long-standing record as Australia's greatest run-scorer in first-class cricket.

The 38-year-old former Test opening batsman passed the previous record of 28,067 runs, held for six decades by 'The Don,' while batting for Somerset against Worcestershire in the English County Championship on Thursday.

Langer made 107 for his 86th first-class century and 100th hundred in all competitions and has now amassed 28,080 first-class runs.

Tom Moody, former Test allrounder and coach of Langer's Western Australian state side, said the indomitable left-hander was a wonderful role model to all cricketers.

"I have had the good fortune to have played alongside Justin in many successful Western Australian teams over the years, and worked with him recently as his coach," Moody said.

"Throughout that time Justin has never offered anything but high standards and has been a wonderful role model, not only to cricketers but all sportsmen and professional individuals as well."

"I extend my personal congratulations to him for passing such a significant landmark in Australian cricket."

Western Australian Cricket Association chief executive and former Test opening batsman Graeme Wood said: "It is testimony to Justin's professionalism that he has been able to achieve this record."

"His outstanding preparation for every match that he played is a major factor behind his longevity at the top level and a great lesson for all aspiring cricketers."

Langer took 354 first-class games to eclipse Bradman's record at an average of 50.32.

By comparison the great Don Bradman accumulated his 28,067 runs from 234 first-class matches at a stunning average of 95.14 with 117 centuries as well as averaging 99.94 in his 52 Tests.

"I'm thrilled to beat the record," Langers said.

"Not so much to go past him because Bradman is in a league of his own. But just scoring this many runs is a tribute to having played for such a long time and having worked so hard to score lots of runs."

## Lee's comeback derailed

**Cricket**

AFP, Northampton

Brett Lee's hopes of featuring in next week's third Ashes Test at Edgbaston suffered a major blow on Thursday as the injury-plagued pace bowler was ruled out of Australia's tour match against Northamptonshire.

Lee has been sidelined for the first two Tests against England after injuring his side in Australia's final warm-up match against the England Lions at the start of this month.

With Ricky Ponting's side trailing 1-0 in the series, the tourists had hoped to include Lee against Northamptonshire to prove his fitness for the Edgbaston clash.

But he was restricted to stretching and jogging exercises at the County Ground on Thursday, while his teammates prepared in earnest in the nets to face their hosts in a three-day match starting on Friday.

Mike Hussey, standing in as captain against his old county, later confirmed at a press conference that Lee will not be playing.

An Australia team spokesman declined to confirm Lee's unavailability in Northampton definitely rules him out of an imminent Test return. But the consensus is that there is little chance of him being risked

next week, unless in an emergency.

In the 32-year-old pace bowler's absence in the first two Tests, Australia dominated an opening draw in Cardiff and then lost at Lord's last week.

One of their main worries has been the form of Lee's strike-bowling partner Mitchell Johnson, who will play against Northamptonshire in the hope of finding his range in time to help Australia battle back into the five-match series in Birmingham.

The Queensland left-armers was expected to be Australia's main threat on his first Ashes tour after an impressive series in South Africa, but he has struggled to adapt to English conditions.

However, Hussey insists he won't over-bowl Johnson in an attempt to get him back on track.

"He seems comfortable and was focused at training," Hussey said on Thursday.

"Him and (bowling coach) Troy Cooley are very clear on what they need to work on."

"Hopefully he can come into the game in a good frame of mind and clear on what he wants to work on and can get his confidence right up for the next Test."

"I don't want to bowl him into the ground as there is just

over a week until the (third) Test starts."

"I don't want him punching out 25-30 overs in an innings or anything like that."

"I'll communicate with him and see how he's feeling, and also take into account the situation of the game."

## D/N fixtures

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4th ODIs, to be played in New Delhi and Mohali respectively. Mumbai, set to welcome back international cricket after the terror attacks in November last year, will be hosting the final match of the series on November 11.

The series comes immediately after the Champions League, the multi-nation, inter-club tournament being jointly organised by the boards of India, South Africa and Australia. It will be held in India from October 8-23 and will feature 12 club sides from seven countries.

### SCHEDULE

Oct 25: 1st ODI, Jaipur (D/N)  
Oct 28: 2nd ODI, Nagpur (D/N)  
Oct 31: 3rd ODI, Delhi (D/N)  
Nov 2: 4th ODI, Mohali (D/N)  
Nov 5: 5th ODI, Hyderabad (D/N)  
Nov 8: 6th ODI, Guwahati  
Nov 11: 7th ODI, Mumbai (D/N)

## Kiwi stars dodge IPL lure

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security up against representing his country. The onus lies on the administrators to make sure such clashes don't occur in future otherwise they are going to find players making decisions that they may not like."

This is not the first time an ugly clash has occurred between the IPL and international cricket. Last year Vettori and McCullum, among others did not turn up for the warm-up games before the Tests in England because that provided them extra IPL matches. This year, Sri Lanka's Test tour of England was postponed because of a clash with the IPL. Sri Lanka's replacements, West Indies, made clear their displeasure over having to play Tests in England as opposed to the Twenty20 matches in South Africa. Having been told he could delay his departure to England from South Africa to stay on in the IPL Chris Gayle, the West

Indies captain, showed up just two days before the first Test of the series against England.

Mills also called for the "powerful boards" of India, Australia and England to help create a window for IPL in the new FTP. "In time I believe this will be an issue for all players around the world, particularly if the IPL grows, but right now it is a problem for New Zealand, West Indies, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka whose players do not earn as much from the sport as those from other countries," Mills said. "It is important that the big boards of India, Australia and England recognise this issue for what it is, and when they look at finalising the next FTP they think about what they can do to help cricket around the globe and specifically create a window for the IPL. That will ensure teams from the smaller nations can still field their best players in international cricket."

## Mashrafe

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to fly to Australia within a very short time to consult with his surgeon Dr. David Young about his injured right knee.

"I'm still not sure about the extent of the damage. I've heard that there could be a bit of internal bleeding probably. I will have to travel abroad and get it checked and we'll see whether a surgery is required or not. But I'm confident that I will return to cricket pretty soon," he informed.

Pacer Shahadat Hossain and rookie wicketkeeper Sahagir Hossain also returned home along with their skipper but left-arm spinner Enamul Haque, the other player not part of the Tigers' ODI squad, stayed back in England to consult an eye specialist and will return on Monday.

The three players were greeted with applause at the VIP Terminal of Zia International Airport where BCB director and media committee chairman Jalal Yunus received them.

## Hayden plans academy in Chennai

CRICINFO, undated

Matthew Hayden has planned to set up a youth academy in Chennai and wants to take the help of Rahul Dravid and his Super Kings coach Stephen Fleming in the venture.

Hayden said he had decided to give back to the city where he had practised playing on turning tracks ten years ago on Australia's 2000-01 tour to India. "About a decade back, when I came here to practise on turning tracks, I told myself standing in an empty Chepauk Stadium that I would score a century for Australia one day," Hayden told the Times of India. "I did that, and now this is a way of giving something back to the city from where I have got so much."

Hayden said education would be given equal importance to cricket in the academy. "We should be able to understand that the kids who will be training in the academy may not go on to become cricketers in life. Education is something they can always fall back on."

## Sharapova ready to roll

AP, Newport Beach

Maria Sharapova declared her surgically repaired right shoulder fully healed and that she was ready to return to the court for the first time since a disappointing performance at Wimbledon.

"I am a hundred percent," Sharapova said Wednesday night before making an appearance for the Newport Beach Breakers in their World Team Tennis match against Kansas City.

"I mean, if I wasn't at that point, I certainly wouldn't be playing. That's why I took my time and gave myself a chance to really go out there and to feel like I didn't have any excuses."

Sharapova played in three matches for the Breakers, winning all three.

She teamed with Julie Ditty to take women's doubles, 5-2; combined with Kaes Van't Hof to capture mixed doubles, 5-2; and defeated Meghann Shaughnessy 5-4 (5-1) in women's singles.

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captain Younus Khan took the second new ball as soon as it was due in the 81st over.

Samaraweera welcomed the change by driving the first delivery from Umar Gul to the cover fence and executing another perfect off-drive from the last ball of the over.

Sri Lanka suffered a setback soon after lunch when Samaraweera strained a hamstring while taking a single and called for a runner.

The injury did not seem to bother him as he hit the first ball from pace bowler Mohammad Aamer for a boundary, but then was smashed on the helmet by a rising ball later in the same over.

Samaraweera was dismissed in the following over when he failed to read a straight ball from off-spinner Saeed Aijmal and nicked an easy catch to wicketkeeper

Kamran Akmal.

## SCOREBOARD

Final scoreboard on the fifth day of the third and final Test between Pakistan and Sri Lanka at the Sinhalese Sports Club in Colombo on Friday: PAKISTAN: First innings 299 (Manzoor 93, Younis 90, Malik 45, Thushara 5-83, Kulasekera 3-47)

SRI LANKA: First innings 233 (Sangakkara 45, Jayawardene 79, Dilshan 44; Kaneria 5-62, Aijmal 3-70)

PAKISTAN: Second innings 425-9 decl (Malik 134, Akmal 74, Gul 46; Herath 5-157)

SRI LANKA: Second innings (183-3)

Paranavitana c Fawad b Malik 73

Warnapura c Malik b Kaneria 31

Sangakkara not out 130

Jayawardene c Akmal b Kaneria 2

Samaraweera c Akmal b Aijmal 73

Mathews not out 64

Extras: (b-1, lb-7, nb-9, w-1) 18  
Total: (For 4 wks in 134 overs) 391  
Did not bat: Dilshan, Herath, Vaas, Thushara, Kulasekera.  
Fall of wickets: 1-83, 2-139, 3-155, 4-277.

**Bowler O M R W**  
Gul 12 0 65 0  
Aamer 21 5 46 0  
Younis 8 0 25 0  
Aijmal 43 9 95 1  
Malik 14 1 38 1  
Kaneria 36 3 114 2

Result: Match drawn and Sri Lanka won three-match series 2-0.

Man-of-the-match: Kumar Sangakkara.  
Man-of-the-series: Nuwan Kulasekera.

## Swine flu

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Cricket Australia said: "Australian team medical staff have asked that Ben quarantine himself away from the Australian team and other cricketing media for the next three days."

"These measures are being taken as a precautionary step. There is no indication that anybody associated with the Australian team has the same symptoms."

## Rana gets central contract

CRICINFO, undated

Rana Navedul Hasan, the Pakistan fast bowler, has been awarded a central contract for 2009 and been placed in the bottom of three categories. Naved was recalled to Pakistan's one-day international squad after cutting ties with the unofficial ICL and has been put in category C of the central contracts system.

The PCB had earlier included Mohammad Yousuf, Abdul Razzaq and Imran Nazir in the central contract system after the trio quit the ICL.

Players bracketed in category C receive Rs. 100,000 per month.



MARIA SHARAPOVA