

Yousuf takes the blame

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

Pakistan captain Mohammad Yousuf has shouldered the blame for Pakistan's shock 36-run defeat against Australia in Sydney, and has said his dismissal was the turning point of Pakistan's chase on the fourth afternoon.

After a disappointing morning session for the visitors, Australia set the visitors 176 to win their first Test in 15 years against them. Pakistan began the chase well, but lost wickets in clusters, a pattern similar to their failed, low-totals chases in Sri Lanka and New Zealand last year. Salman Butt and Faisal Iqbal fell in the same over and just after tea Yousuf and Misbahul Haq fell in the space of three balls to Nathan Hauritz.

It took a special return catch from Hauritz to dismiss him, but Yousuf called it a "pathetic" stroke. "My shot this afternoon was pathetic and it turned the game," he said. "Otherwise we would have won, not easily, but won. Yeah I blame myself."

Though they dominated for much of the Test, victory was never a sealed deal. Given the lack of Tests Pakistan have had over the last two years - and the lack of wins - questions can be asked of whether they even know how to win. Yousuf had complained previously of his batsmen being affected by playing too much limited-overs cricket and not enough Tests, a shortcoming that has become more apparent with each passing innings.

"We have to be professional and we have to perform," Yousuf said. "We have to take pres-

sure, especially me, since I am very experienced and the rest are all young. I have to take them and carry the whole game. The same happened in first innings, we gave wickets away. We need more discipline, more patience and we need more batting sense. We didn't show that."

In the aftermath of another series loss to Australia - their fifth in a row - the spotlight will fall on Yousuf's defensive field settings this morning to Michael Hussey and Peter Siddle. The pair had put on 29 overnight and were allowed to take the partnership to 123, the highest for the ninth-wicket in contests between the two countries. At most stages, Yousuf had up to eight men on the boundary for Hussey, who walked to his 11th Test hundred. Siddle went on to his highest Test score of 38.

"We tried to contain Hussey and put pressure on Siddle. But he batted very well, didn't give us his wicket and batted two-and-a-half hours in the morning session to take the game away," Yousuf said.

There will also be scrutiny over the performance of Kamran Akmal, who dropped Hussey thrice and Siddle once, apart from failing with the bat. Yousuf defended Akmal after yesterday's performance and did so again today.

"Dropped catches are a part of the game," Yousuf said. "They batted very well after that. But it's difficult to win when you drop them. If we hadn't dropped catches we could have won it. We have dropped a lot over the last few months, but we can't help it. We try hard in practice."

Pakistan head to Hobart for the final Test, which is due to begin on January 14.



South Africa captain Graeme Smith salutes the Newlands crowd as he leaves the field after scoring a majestic 183 on the fourth day of the third Test against England in Cape Town yesterday.

Eng survive new ball

Cricket

AFP, Cape Town

Andrew Strauss and Alastair Cook survived some hostile bowling from South Africa's new ball bowlers on the fourth day of the third Test at Newlands on Wednesday as England set out on the long quest to preserve their lead in the series.

Set 466 to win -- or to bat out a potential 146 overs -- England were 38 for no wicket at tea.

Morne Morkel and Dale Steyn both bowled well at the start of the final innings but Strauss and Cook batted resolutely.

Steyn induced an edge from Strauss in the second over but it fell short of Graeme Smith at first slip. Six overs later he had two close leg before wicket appeals turned down by umpire Tony Hill and South Africa decided not to seek reviews. Strauss responded in Steyn's next over with three off-side boundaries off successive balls.

South Africa added 135 runs for the loss of five wickets in 31.2 overs on Wednesday before Smith declared.

Smith took his overnight score of 162 to 183 as he and

Kallis batted comfortably against the second new ball, which was taken at the start of play.

Smith showed attacking intent as he added 21 runs off 29 balls but was caught on the fine leg boundary when he top-edged a hook against Graham Onions. He made his 183 off 272 balls with 25 fours.

Having successfully asked for a review of a leg before wicket decision when he was on 51, Smith might have survived again had umpire Tony Hill spotted that Onions overstepped the bowling crease -- or Smith asked for another review. England have only bowled two no-balls in the first three matches of the series.

Kallis followed up his first innings century by making 46 before he edged an attempted square cut against James Anderson and was caught behind.

Anderson took three for 98 and Graeme Swann three for 127.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at tea on the fourth day of the third Test between South Africa and England at Newlands in Cape Town on Wednesday:
SOUTH AFRICA: First innings 291

ENGLAND: First innings, 273

SOUTH AFRICA: Second innings (overnight 312-2)
Prince lbw b Swann 15
Smith c Collingwood b Onions 183
Amla c Cook b Swann 95
Kallis c Prior b Anderson 46
De Villiers c Broad b Anderson 34
Duminy c Prior b Anderson 36
Bouchier c Bell b Swann 15
Steyn not out 1
Extras: (b-8, lb-7, nb-2, pen-5) 22
Total: (For 7 wickets dec. in 111.2 overs) 447
Fall of wickets: 1-31, 2-261, 3-346, 4-376, 5-401, 6-442, 7-444
Did not bat: M Morkel, Harris, F de Wet

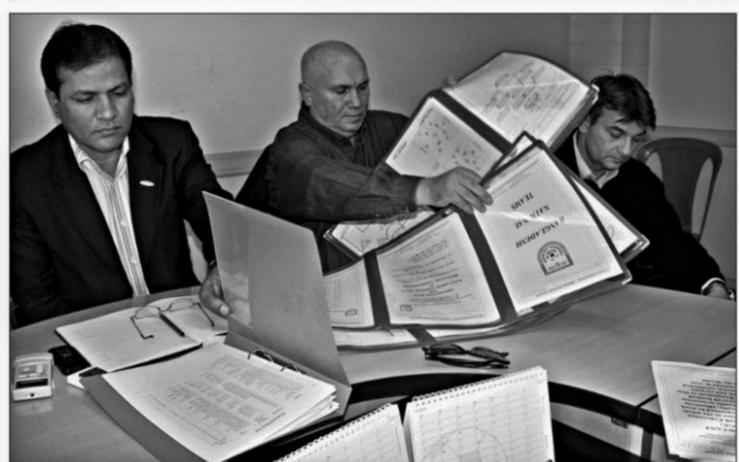
Bowler O M R W
Anderson 22.2 1 98 3
Onions 22 4 87 1
Swann 37 5 127 3
Broad 22 4 79 0
Pietersen 3 0 6 0
Trott 5 0 30 0

ENGLAND: Second innings

Strauss not out 15
Cook not out 21
Extras: (b-1, lb-1) 2
Total: (Fornoloss in 16 overs) 38

To bat: Trott, Pietersen, Collingwood, Bell, Prior, Broad, Swann, Anderson, Onions

Bowler O M R W
Morkel 5 1 9 0
Steyn 6 1 17 0
DeWet 3 2 5 0
Harris 2 1 5 0



Newly appointed football coach of Bangladesh national team Zoran Djordjevic (C) reveals his plans to the Bangladesh Football Federation at his official presentation with the press at the BFF Bhaban yesterday.

Youths target

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New Zealand and his team's strategy therein, the former Bangladesh all-rounder said, the two specialist leg-spinners can give them an extra bite. He also spoke of the possibility of opening with a leg-spinner in those conditions to emphasize his faith on the slow bowlers. He however pointed out three players who could be key in making a difference at the big stage.

"Wicketkeeper batsman Anamul Haque has been a brilliant find. The skipper (Mahmudul) has been our most consistent performer with the bat and ball. Shabbir Rahaman is an exciting leg-break bowler who also has tremendous ability with the bat," was the coach's reading.

Bangladesh start their campaign against Papua New Guinea on 16th, and take on West Indies the next day and will play their last group game against Pakistan on the 19th. All the matches of this group will be held at Fitzherbert Park in Napier.

Each team will play two warm up matches before the tournament. Bangladesh will play against New Zealand on the 11th and Australia the following day, both matches will be held in Christchurch. The Super League quarterfinals are slated on January 23 and 24 while the semifinals will take place January 25 and 27. The final will be held on January 30 at Bert Sutcliffe, Christchurch.

Squad
Mahmudul Hasan (Captain), Amit Majumder, Saikat Ali, Shabbir Rahaman, Muminul Hoque, Mohammed Abul Hasan, Kamrul Islam Rabbi, Alauddin Babu, Shaker Ahmed, Nur Hossain, Anamul Haque, Quazi Nurul Hasan, Tasamul Hoque, Soumya Sarkar, Arman Badsha

Clarke for Kent

AFP, London

Australia seamer Stuart Clark will play for Kent for the first half of the 2010 English season, the county announced on Wednesday.

Clark had been poised to be Kent's overseas player for 2009 but that was blocked after he won a recall to the Australia side and Kent's chairman of cricket, Graham Johnson, was delighted to see the move resurrected.

"Stuart is a tremendous character and has the ability and experience that we are looking for," Johnson said.

Zoran admires local passion

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"This is the eleventh time I have been selected as coach of a team and I know our life is not long and I know being a national team coach I have to give my best and it is not enough if I say I give my best, and it does not reflect on the results and it is simple you can't get a certificate from people and the federation," said the 57-year-old coach.

Zoran, however, said that it would not be easy for him to work with the experienced officials of the federation.

"It is not easy to work with

this federation. You see this two tigers (Salahuddin and Badal Roy, who sat besides him during the talks) they were footballers and I know how they were and I know it very well which types of character they have. They know who is the real football man and who is a diplomatic man," the former Yemen coach said. "When you are in this position you have to be loyal to his position and use every second efficiently and I will try my best and I hope for all the help from the federation and the media because we need to be

united."

Apart from national teams, Zoran has experience of coaching the various clubs of Middle East. He also guided Churchill Brothers SC to the I-League title in 2008-2009 season, the first foreign coach to achieve the feat.

"What I want from him (Zoran) is respectable results," said BFF president Salahuddin adding that the circumstance would tell whether the agreement would extend the agreement with the Serbian coach in future.

Stunning Aussie win

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Earlier, Hussey took full advantage of Yousuf's oddly defensive captaincy and a placid SCG pitch to restore Australia's victory prospects. Hussey and Siddle carried their bats through the first session and at one stage looked set to break the 116-year-old ninth-innings Australian partnership record at the SCG set by Syd Gregory and Jack Blackham.

Australia's revival was assisted greatly by the timid tactics of the Pakistanis who, as a result, were faced with a testing chase. Yousuf's defensive field configurations - which included eight men on the fence for Hussey, who was barely threatened up to lunch - did little to enhance his own reputation as a tactician and played as large a role in drawing Australia back into the match as the team's turgid catching of previous days.

Hussey has made more fluent centuries, but few as important as that completed on Wednesday. Having watched on from the non-striker's end as Australia lost 5 for 40 the preceding evening, Hussey seized control of the Australian innings on a flat batting surface and, in the process, relieved any lingering doubt hanging over his position in the team.

Hussey declined the charity singles being offered by Yousuf and instead looked to pierce the boundaries with drives that seldom left the carpet. He entered the

cover-driven fours off the bowling of Danish Kaneria and sealed his first ton of the summer with a glorious straight drive off Umar Gul. Hussey punched the air in delight upon reaching the milestone, acutely aware of the innings' importance in the context of the match. Siddle, meanwhile, batted with tremendous discipline and restraint to raise his highest Test score of 38.

Mohammad Asif and Kaneria claimed the final two Australian wickets six overs after the lunch break, but not before the hosts had added 95 runs on the fourth morning. Asif ended the dogged stand of Hussey and Siddle by removing the latter to a shorter delivery gloved to slip. Kaneria then completed the innings and a personal five-wicket haul by bowling Bollinger with a delivery that ricocheted off the batsman's elbow and foot. It mattered little. Australia were already back in the contest.

SCOREBOARD

Final scoreboard of the second Test between Australia and Pakistan at the Sydney Cricket Ground on Wednesday:
AUSTRALIA: First innings 127 all out in 44.2 overs (Johnson 38, Hussey 28, Hauritz 21; Asif 6-41, Sami 3-27)
PAKISTAN: First innings 333-9 dec. in 96 overs (Farhat 53, Butt 71, Yousuf 46, Umar 49; Bolinger 4-72)
AUSTRALIA: Second innings (Overnight 286-8)

Watson c Iqbal b Gul 97
Hughes c and b Kaneria 37
Butt c Haddin b Johnson 21
Ponting c Iqbal b Gul 11
Hussey not out 134
Clarke lbw b Asif 21
North c Iqbal b Kaneria 2
Haddin lbw b Kaneria 15
Johnson b Kaneria 3
Hauritz c Misbah b Gul 4
Siddle c Misbah b Asif 38
Bollinger b Kaneria 0
Extras: (b-6, lb-5, w-3, nb-5) 19
Total: (All out in 125.4 overs) 381
Fall of wickets: 1-105, 2-144, 3-159, 4-217, 5-226, 6-246, 7-252, 8-257, 9-380

Bowler O M R W
Asif 27 8 53 2
Sami 19.5 4 74 0
Gul 28 4 83 3
Kaneria 47.5 3 151 5
Farhat 3 0 9 0

PAKISTAN: Second innings
Farhat c Johnson b Bollinger 22
Butt c Haddin b Johnson 21
Faisal c Haddin b Johnson 7
Yousuf c & b Hauritz 49
Umar c Johnson b Bollinger 19
Misbahul c Hussey b Hauritz 0
Kamran c Haddin b Johnson 11
Sami c Haddin b Hauritz 2
Gul c Siddle b Hauritz 6
Kaneria c Watson b Hauritz 0
Asif not out 0
Extras: (w-1, nb-1) 2
Total: (All out in 38 overs) 139
Fall of wickets: 1-34, 2-50, 3-51, 4-77, 5-77, 6-103, 7-133, 8-133, 9-135

Bowler O M R W
Bollinger 12 3 32 2
Siddle 4 1 27 0
Hauritz 12 1 53 5
Johnson 10 2 27 3

Man-of-the-match: Mike Hussey
Series: Australia led the 3-match series 2-0

Ponting ecstatic

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

All the Australian team talk was right and the doubters were wrong. In the most unbelievable turnaround Ricky Ponting's men up-ended Pakistan on a swinging day to wrap up the series at the SCG and earn smug smiles and celebrations.

Under Ponting the Australians have secured a handful of unthinkable wins, but Ponting rated this at the top, given the self-inflicted circumstances and the huge amount they were behind. There were many reasons why they shouldn't have won by 36 runs: Ponting shouldn't have won the toss and batted; Pakistan shouldn't have given up a 206-run first-innings advantage; Kamran Akmal shouldn't have dropped Michael Hussey three times; and Australia shouldn't have been able to escape from eight-down on the final morning with a lead of 80. They don't matter now.

Ponting believes in his team at every position and on days like today everyone can see why. "What we have read over the last couple of days and what we have seen on the news has probably just steered us all a little bit," Ponting said. "It's just made us want to fight the game out as much as we can and prove that we are never out of the contest."

He did this sort of thing in Adelaide in 2006-07, when the second Ashes Test was drifting to a draw before Shane Warne

intervened. A year later it was Michael Clarke's three wickets in the last over that did for India at the SCG, and on the same ground 12 months ago Mitchell Johnson bowled the injured Graeme Smith just before time ran out. In those games Australia were in charge, racing to seal the victory they deserved.

This time they stole it from Pakistan by completing an outrageous comeback on a ground the local players now believe they can do anything on. "I think this is the most satisfying one [of the SCG wins] because I don't think anyone in the world apart from all the blokes inside our dressing room thought we could win," Ponting said.

Australia's current unit is not jammed full of world-beating talent, but it is crammed with desire, and will suffer for their captain. Nathan Hauritz picked up a bleeding finger and a bruised chest from his caught-and-bowled off Mohammad Yousuf's stinging straight drive, the key wicket of the final innings, and walked off with his second five-for in two Tests.

Peter Siddle carries a sore shoulder from his career-best 38, an innings as important to the victory as Michael Hussey's 134, which pulled Australia from depression. Shane Watson's smooth 97 was also invaluable and Mitchell Johnson slid through on his captain's backing with two wickets in his opening over before tea. That reduced Ponting to 3 for 51 in their previously comfortable chase of 176, but they were

quickly being tortured. Ecstasy was soon the only emotion for the locals who were jiggling, jumping and dancing on and off the field.

Results like these can change the course of history. In 1992 in Colombo, Australia were faced with a similar situation, surging back from a 291-run first-innings deficit to dismiss Sri Lanka for 164, 17 short of victory. Warne was the hero in the final stages of that game and was soon drenched in match-winning aura as the team shot to the top of the world. In this one Hauritz got in the road of Pakistan to leave with 5 for 53, the best return of his 12 Tests.

Ponting was heavily criticised from the first day for his decision to bat on a juicy surface that set up Australia's fall for 127. By the end his logic was satisfyingly sound. "I backed us at the start of the game to make more runs in the first innings than what I thought Pakistan could make in the last innings," he said. "As it turns out we got 120-odd and bowled them out for 139 in the last innings of the game."

At one stage during his post-mortem a relaxed Ponting teasingly asked all those in the press conference who had doubted his decision to raise their hands. All the Australian journalists' arms went up. "I feel better now," he said. He smiled, knowing that when it comes to Australia's Test team he knows best. "It comes down to results and we've got a great result here," he said. "So I look like a genius where I didn't a couple of days ago."

Briatore ponders legal action

INTERNET, undated

Former Renault team boss Flavio Briatore said it was very probable he would take legal action against Nelson Piquet after having his life ban from Formula One overturned.

Briatore was banned in September by the FIA after former Renault driver Piquet told the ruling body he had been ordered to crash deliberately at the 2008 Singapore Grand Prix to help his Spanish teammate Fernando Alonso win the race.

Toss crucial for Shakib

FROM PAGE 17

against India at home and in the 2007 World Cup.

"I think our pace bowlers failed to bowl in right spot and that was the reason we could not put initial pressure on the Sri Lankan top order and on the other hand it was difficult for the spinners to grip the wet ball properly. It will be a tough challenge for us to stop the strong Indian batting line-up."

"We got a very good batting track and we have to try to restrict the Indians between

270 to 280 runs if we bowl first and on the other hand I think we have the ability to score even three hundred runs on this track. Actually we want to stick to the basics," opined the wicketkeeper batsman.

Bangladesh's batting performance was impressive as they rode on Mohammad Ashraful's 75 to score 260 runs despite a top order hiccup but Mushfiqur believes that there is a lot of scope to improve their batting.

"We got a good start but suddenly we lost a few wickets, so we have to make sure that we lose less wicket to create the opportunity to accelerate the innings in the last ten overs. We proved the big hitting ability in the last game as we collected 90 runs in the last ten overs," he said.

A tough challenge awaits the Tigers against India but there was no short of confidence in the Bangladesh tent ahead of their second match in the tournament.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

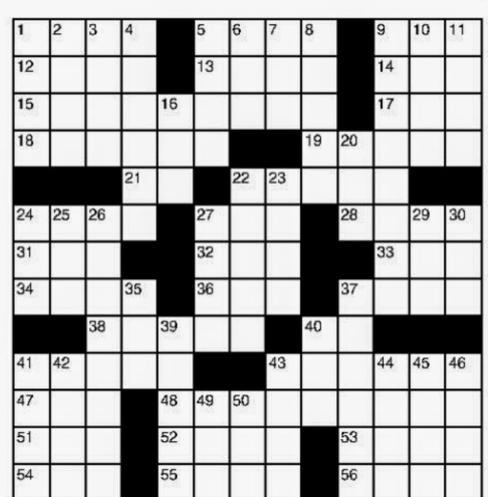
ACROSS
1 Hardly hirsute
5 Last few notes
9 Hairdo goo
12 Addict
13 Any time now
14 Raw rock
15 Farm animals
17 Play-ground game
18 River craft
19 Cow catcher?
21 "Heavens!"
22 On the qui vive
24 Wan
27 Fellow
28 Pull strings?
31 Red or Black
32 Commotion
33 Gridlock component
34 Jailer's janglers
36 Card-table cry
37 Terrier type

DOWN
1 Magnitude
2 Largest of the seven
3 Tax
4 Really hand-some
5 Eliot-based musical
6 Yoko of music
7 Elmer, to Bugs
8 Bracelet location
9 Couldn't proceed
10 Historic periods
11 Toy block name
16 Firmament

20 Museum fill
22 Sound portion
23 Holyoke founder
24 Mary
25 Request
26 Needle location?
27 Jokes
29 Aye
30 Prior to
35 Droop
37 Margaret Chase and Anna Deavere
39 Vacillates
40 Donkey
41 "... so why not take all —?"
42 Caspian feeder
43 Puts two and two together
44 Regiment
45 Beige
46 Time-table, for short
49 Shock and —
50 On pension (Abbr.)

Solution time: 25 mins.

S	W	A	B	P	E	A	S	T	A	B
A	I	D	A	O	A	R	T	U	N	E
P	L	A	T	I	N	U	M	A	N	T
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K	O	I	R	U	N	S				
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I	G	O	R	A	S	S				
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R	I	O	T	H	A	M	P	R	O	T
A	N	N	E	A	M	P	C	L	A	D
N	A	Y	S	B	A	A	K	I	D	S



CRYPTOQUIP

D A N D N Q Q E B N M D B O U F A E
F N R F E Q Y K M B E M N X X D A E R V
F N D V Q D K B A D R V N X R A N Z
R O J A N J N O X Y - U N D D K D O Z V !
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF A CERTAIN RODENT LIKES TO RESIDE IN THE CAPITAL OF OMAN, I SUPPOSE THAT'S A MUSCAT MUSKRAT.
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: X equals L