



PHOTO: INTERNET

The victorious Australia team celebrate after beating Pakistan in the third and final Test at the Bellerive Oval in Hobart yesterday.

Aussies' clean sweep

Cricket CRICINFO, undated

Australia wrapped up their 12th consecutive Test victory over Pakistan on the final afternoon in Hobart, where Khurram Manzoor's fighting half-century was not enough to salvage a draw for the visitors.

in the side with a patient 77 from 239 deliveries that gave Pakistan, for the morning at least, a tiny sniff of saving the game.

Manzoor showed impressive resolve for most of his innings but it didn't hold, and soon after an injudicious swipe against Hauritz he slashed at a cut against the spinner and was caught behind.

Hauritz finished with 3 for 30 and was comfortably the leading wicket-taker for the series, with 18 at 23.05. Siddle was also happy with his 3 for 25, which was his best return of a lean summer, and he wrapped up the victory with the second new ball when Danish Kaneria played on for 1.

Pakistan's victory target of 438 was not the issue for Australia, they simply needed to grab the remaining wickets while the weather held up. Showers had been tipped on the final day but the Tasmanian local Ricky Ponting, who was confident in his knowledge of the state's weather, had his decision not to enforce the follow-on vindicated.

Australia began the day impressively with Shoaib Malik caught behind off Siddle for 19, after adding only one to his overnight score. That was the key breakthrough for Australia as it opened the way into Pakistan's lower order, and the wicketkeeper Sarfraz Ahmed finished his debut Test with a disappointing batting return when he was caught at slip off Hauritz for 5.

Sarfraz departed in strange circumstances, when his edge clipped the gloves of Brad Haddin, went through the hands of Clarke and onto his boot before bouncing up for Clarke to complete the catch. If Pakistan had made their catches stick throughout the series it might have been a more enjoyable tour for them. Now they must wait until the two Tests in England in July to redeem themselves.

SCOREBOARD Scoreboard at stumps on the fifth day of the third and final Test between Australia and Pakistan at the Bellerive Oval in Hobart on Monday: AUSTRALIA: First innings 519 decl in 142.5 overs (Ponting 209, Clarke 166; Asif 2-104, Aamer 2-97, Kaneria 3-189) PAKISTAN: First innings 301

(Butt 102, Malik 58; Siddle 2-39, Hauritz 3-96, Katich 3-34) AUSTRALIA: Second innings 219 decl (Katich 100, Ponting 89; Malik 2-16)

PAKISTAN: Second innings (overnight 103 for 4) Farhat c Haddin b Siddle 14 Butt b Bollinger 8 Manzoor c Haddin b Hauritz 77 Yousof lbw b Watson 23 Akmal lbw b Watson 23 Malik c Haddin b Siddle 19 Sarfraz c Clarke b Hauritz 30 Aamer not out 30 Gul c Clarke b Hauritz 0 Asif b Johnson 0 Kaneria b Siddle 1 Extras: (b-10, lb-3, nb-1) 14 Total: (All out in 86.2 overs) 206 Fall of wickets: 1-11, 2-29, 3-61, 4-83, 5-104, 6-123, 7-189, 8-191, 9-192.

Bowler O M R W Bollinger 13 4 31 1 Siddle 15.2 7 25 3 Johnson 21 4 59 1 Watson 17 4 38 2 Hauritz 17 6 30 3 Katich 3 1 10 0 Result: Australia won by 231 runs and clinched the 3-match series 3-0. Man-of-the-match: Ricky Ponting. Man-of-the-series: Shane Watson.

Ricky defends his side

Cricket CRICINFO, undated

Australia's 2009-10 won't go down in history as one of the great summers. It didn't have the hype of an Ashes series, nor the tension of a contest against India, nor the raw combat of a series against South Africa. But don't be fooled, this was a big season for Ricky Ponting's men.

It was an important two months during which Ponting's hard work to mould a new-look outfit could have unravelled if the side had sunk into a post-Ashes-loss depression.

Instead, his team won five of six Tests, enjoyed a whitewash against Pakistan and most importantly almost all the players made significant personal progress. In a bridging summer in the 18 months between Ashes battles, it was the best Ponting could have hoped for.

His eyes are firmly fixed on England's trip to Australia later this year, so much so that he stayed up on Sunday night to watch their defeat in Johannesburg. Following Australia's victory against Pakistan in Hobart, he said there were no boxes yet to be ticked ahead of the Ashes in November.

"I don't think there are, to tell you the truth," Ponting said.

"I'm really comfortable with the way a lot of the guys have come on through the summer. If you look at Shane Watson in the opening role, it was probably something that we weren't entirely sure about, coming in to the summer, but I think he's put his own stamp on that role particularly well, as he has with his bowling as well."

"Nathan Hauritz has certainly stepped up in this series alone to take 18 wickets in this series on two wickets, particularly in Melbourne and Hobart, that didn't really offer much for him at all. That sort of return for a finger-spinner is a great effort. Those two guys in particular have really stood up and started to learn a lot more about themselves and about the game."

Watson was comfortably Australia's best and most consistent batsman for the season, with 609 runs at 60.90. The ease with which he adjusted to the Test opening role was a surprise to everyone but the Australian selectors, and 13 wickets at 25.84 with a handy knack for reverse-swing was an added bonus.

Hauritz and Mitchell Johnson shared the top bowling honours with 29 victims each but just as impressive was Doug Bollinger, who entered the summer with only one Test to his name and collected 25 at 20.80, bringing extra intensity to Australia's new-ball efforts. Peter Siddle performed a work-

horse role and finally gained some reward with five wickets at Bellerive Oval, which confirmed the attack is on track with Ben Hilfenhaus still to return.

In the batting line-up, Ponting atoned for a quiet couple of months with nearly 300 runs for the Hobart Test. Simon Katich provided reliable starts, Michael Clarke built his highest Test score and Michael Hussey saved his career with a summer average of 55.77. Brad Haddin was very good behind the stumps and the only man to struggle was Marcus North, although Ponting defended his No. 6 and hoped he would bounce back on the tour of New Zealand in March.

"He's not a weak link at all," Ponting said. "It was only a couple of Tests ago that we were saying he was probably our best and most in-form player. Coming in to this week I was in the same boat [out of form] and things change pretty quickly. I don't see a weak link in our side at the moment. Hopefully everything turns out the way we want it for Marcus and he can go to New Zealand and have a good series there and then there won't be any speculation about anyone in our line-up."

What has impressed Ponting most about the summer has been the clinical nature of his team's victories. It began with a three-day mauling of West Indies at the Gabba

and finished with a 231-run demolition of Pakistan. In all six Tests, even the draw against West Indies in Adelaide, Australia's attack took 20 wickets, which was a major achievement given the struggles they had endured trying to knock sides over during the past year.

"It's been a great series for us, it's been a great summer for us to tell you the truth," Ponting said. "There was a fair bit of conjecture coming into the summer after the end of the Ashes about where we were going with our Test cricket and I spelled things out pretty clearly to the team about where I thought we were going and I think we have improved a lot through the summer."

"You just can't afford to have half an hour or an hour's play where the game's not going anywhere. You can't afford to let that happen. Someone has continually got to put their hand up and make sure the game is going forward and that's the way I will keep challenging the team. We certainly can't be happy with just sitting back and accepting what we've done through the summer."

Australia have four Tests, two in New Zealand and two in England against Pakistan, before they set out to regain the urn at home. After their success over the past two months, those four games will be about fine-tuning rather than remodelling.

Table with 5 columns: Player, O, M, R, W. Includes Zaheer c Rokibul b Shakib 11, Sharma c Mushfiqur b Shahadat 1, Sreesanth c Kayes b Shakib 1, Extras: (b-1, lb-6, nb-5, w-1) 13, Total: (For all out in 70.5 overs) 243, Fall of wickets: 1-79, 2-79, 3-85, 4-107, 5-149, 6-150, 7-182, 8-209, 9-230.

Table with 5 columns: Player, O, M, R, W. Includes Zaheer 9 1 32 2, Sreesanth 3 0 13 0, Sharma 5 1 14 1.

Vball training

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

A month-long volleyball training, organised by Manikganj District Sports Association, began at Manikganj Government Boys' High School playground yesterday.

A total of 50 students from Manikganj Sadar Upazilla are taking part in the training.

Varsity games

SPORTS REPORTER

The annual sports competition of Dhaka University's Rokeya Hall was held at the university's central ground yesterday.

Supriya Rani Das, a student of Bangla and Afrin Afroz, a student of Mathematics, emerged joint champions while Fatematu-Zohora became runner-up in the meet where some hundreds of students took part.

Vice chancellor Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique declared the one-day meet open while pro vice chancellor Prof Harun-or-Rashid and treasurer Prof Mizanur Rahman distributed prizes among the winners after the competition.

Zia bounces back

SPORTS REPORTER

GM Ziaur Rahman returned to winning run in the 8th Parsvnath International Open Chess tournament after beating IM Priyadarshan in the seventh round held in Delhi yesterday.

Zia has now 5.5 points as he went down to IM Lalit Babu in the sixth round on Sunday. GM Niaz Murshed drew with Preethi in the sixth round game to raise his point to 3.5. Debadas Chakroborty and Mir Azaz secured three and two points respectively from six games.

Natants eye four gold

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his previous condition and he hopes he will return to the pool to retain his gold," said BSF general secretary Mahbubur Rahman Shahin after announcing the squad at Bangladesh Olympic Bhavan yesterday.

Rubel, who won the 100m backstroke gold in Islamabad 2004, finished behind Sri Lankan Arjun Muralidharan in the 50m backstroke in Colombo 2006, clocking just 12 microseconds more than the gold medalist. But the veteran swimmer is determined to win the gold this time.

"We have been training since January last year and with my previous experience, I believe I will be able to put in my best during the meet though at present I am not at my peak following the hard training," hoped Rubel, who will compete in 50m backstroke, 100m backstroke and 200m individual medley.

Jewel Ahmed, who won bronze medals in both 50m and 100m butterfly in Colombo, said, "Luck was not with me and I narrowly missed gold medals in the last edition. But this time I am confident of a good result."

Bangladesh however never

won a gold medal in the women's section and the officials are banking on Dolly, who won the 50m breaststroke silver in 36.14 seconds in Colombo, far behind Sri Lankan Yamumi Raheem, who clocked 34.37 seconds.

"It will be my fourth Games and I will try my best to bring a gold medal," said Dolly, who bettered her own timing of 37.54 seconds (hand-time) to 35.81 seconds (electronic) in the trials.

Coach Park Tae Gun, who came here eight months ago, has brought in a drastic change to the traditional practice system as each swimmer has been swimming 5,000 to 7,000 metres every day, using the modern equipment brought by him from Korea for the first time and the swimmers are very happy with the way the Korean coach is handling them.

But, the coach was not present at the briefing as he was having back pain which he sustained in a road accident early this month.

Unlike swimming, the Bangladesh Judo Federation has no high expectation but they are expecting to win two gold medals though they had no

such experience to win gold in the three meets they had taken part.

"We will try our best to convert the silver medals we won in the Colombo Games into gold," said BJJF general secretary Abdul Kader.

Considering the technical sides as well as Iranian coach Akhgor Mohammad Reza's training reports, Kader has pinned his hopes on Habibur Rahman (-73kg) and Sushil Chandra Mohanto (-81kg).

SWIMMING SQUADS

MEN: Shahjahan Ali Rony, Kamal Hossain, Hasanul Karim, Rafiqul Islam, Rubel Rana, Jewel Ahmed, Nazrul Islam, Samedul Islam, Shariful Islam, Monirul Islam, Jewel Ahmed Junior, Rabiul Islam Sumon, Mahfizur Rahman and Anik Islam.

WOMEN: Dolly Akhter, Sabura Khatun, Laboni Akhter, Muslima Khatun, Mahfuza Akhter, Sonia Akhter and Nazma Khatun.

JUDO SQUAD

Abu Bakkar Siddique, Milton Majumdar, Habibur Rahman, Sushil Chandra Mohanto, Nurul Islam, Tariqul Islam, Mamunur Rashid, Sheli Ahmed and Farhana Halim Nice.

Too many wickets lost

FROM PAGE 17

But they tried to hit a few good ones as well," said the Tigers mentor.

Siddons was also disappointed with the spoil of most of the day's play due to bad light as only 24.5 overs were bowled on the day and he said that the match's fate will partly depend on the weather condition.

"It depends on weather [on the remaining parts of the match]. Still three days to go. It was disappointing that we got only 20 odd overs today. It is shaping up to be a very good contest. We needed to bat very well today. But tomorrow is another day. We have still a lot of batting to come. I am hopeful we will put up a very good score and put them [India] under pressure," said a confident Bangladesh coach.

"I am hoping the batsmen will apply themselves. We got

three batsmen who can make hundreds. I am hoping one of them to do so. If we lose more play due to bad light, someone may have to do declaration," he added.

The question was asked whether the batsman could ask for stop of the play due to bad light earlier but Siddons made it clear that there was no scope for anyone except umpires to do so.

"The rules are that batsmen cannot ask for bad lights. Neither the batsman can comment on light nor can the coaching staff," he explained.

Bangladesh captain Shakib Al Hasan was also little bit disappointed with the loss of too many wickets but he was looking forward to a good partnership so that they can put a good total on the board and he was also not ready to accept that bad light caused the damage.

"We need to have a good partnership to put up a good total and we are hopeful about it," said Shakib.

And definitely everybody will be looking forward to seeing the Bangladesh captain also shine with the bat after a five-wicket haul in the match which might brighten his chances in the IPL auction.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at stumps on the second day of the first Test between Bangladesh and India at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in Chittagong on Monday: INDIA: First innings (overnight 213-8) Gambhir c Mushfiqur b Shahadat 23 Sehwaq c Tamim b Shakib 52 Dravid b Shahadat 4 Tendulkar not out 105 Laxman st Mushfiqur b Shakib 12 Yuvraj c Rubel b Shakib 7 Karthik c Rokibul b Shahadat 0 Mishra lbw b Shahadat 14

that I wasn't selected in the England Lions squad that got announced. It's been a hard couple of years, just trying to get recognised, trying to get to the stage where I'm being selected for the England Lions team, the academy to South Africa, and just working hard there and getting the recognition to be selected."

James Tredwell emerged as England's preferred spinning understudy to Graeme Swann during the tour of South Africa, and has pushed both Monty Panesar and Adil Rashid out of all three squads. Carberry, meanwhile, has been preferred to Kent's Joe Denly as the probable opening partner for Cook in the Bangladesh Tests.

"Tredwell and Carberry have also continued to impress the selectors over the course of the winter," said Miller. "And we expect both players to make a strong challenge for inclusion in our starting line-up on the

forthcoming tour. We saw Monty bowling for three days in the nets in Jo'burg, and we saw an improvement there in his mental state as well. But James deserves his opportunity, and there is no reason to think we can't play two off-spinners in their conditions."

SQUADS

TEST: Alastair Cook (captain), Ian Bell, Stuart Broad, Michael Carberry, Paul Collingwood, Steven Davies, Graham Onions, Kevin Pietersen, Liam Plunkett, Matt Prior, Ajmal Shahzad, Ryan Sidebottom, Graeme Swann, James Tredwell, Jonathan Trott, Luke Wright. ONE-DAY: Alastair Cook (captain), Tim Bresnan, Stuart Broad, Paul Collingwood, Joe Denly, Eoin Morgan, Matt Prior, Kevin Pietersen, Liam Plunkett, Ryan Sidebottom, Ajmal Shahzad, Graeme Swann, James Tredwell, Jonathan Trott, Luke Wright.

England fined

CRICINFO, undated

Andrew Strauss has been fined for England's forthcoming tour of Bangladesh, but he may yet miss more matches for England after his team was fined for maintaining a slow over rate during the course of South Africa's victory in the final Test of the series at the Wanderers.

Cook captain

FROM PAGE 17 an excellent tour of South Africa in all forms of cricket," said Miller, "and he will continue to lead the side in the T20 format with the two T20 Internationals against the current World champions Pakistan providing excellent preparation for us ahead of the World T20 in the Caribbean. "We are delighted to welcome Ajmal Shahzad to both squads for the first time. He enjoyed an excellent season with Yorkshire last year, made a strong impression while he was in South Africa with the EPP squad and is a bowler with the potential to make a real impact in international cricket."

England's preferred spinning understudy to Graeme Swann during the tour of South Africa, and has pushed both Monty Panesar and Adil Rashid out of all three squads. Carberry, meanwhile, has been preferred to Kent's Joe Denly as the probable opening partner for Cook in the Bangladesh Tests.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down. Includes solutions for 21 mins.

Cryptoquip puzzle grid with letters Y R T B A U R J S W I G L E R K C U R G U J Y Z C B Y D A S R S W G J T Y B T L Q K D A G I U , I D J W B E R G B S J D G B Z J S C K B S J D G B Z J S C ?

CRYPTOQUIP

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: TRADITIONAL SONG WRITTEN ABOUT A NEW YORK BASEBALL PLAYER'S CURLY-COATED DOG: "YANKIE POODLE." Today's Cryptoquip Clue: I equals D