

Australia abase Pakistan

Cricket CricInfo, undated

Australia produced a commanding all-round performance to take a 2-0 lead with a 140-run demolition of Pakistan at the SCG on Sunday.

After being led by Shane Watson and Cameron White in their 6 for 267, the bowlers delivered a stinging hosting display to knock over the tourists for 127 in 37.3 overs.

Pakistan lost their first five wickets for 42 in an awful opening and the result added further to the troubles of the captain Mohammad Yousuf, who is being replaced after the series. Yousuf had mistakenly chosen to bowl first in the hope of getting an advantage from the overcast conditions in the afternoon, but all the support came for the fast men as the sun started to go down.



Australia opener Shane Watson drives on through cover in the second one-day international against Pakistan at the Sydney Cricket Stadium yesterday.

Salman Butt (2) went in the fifth over nicking a shorter one from Bollinger and was taken at second slip by White. Three balls later the combination repeated the dismissal, dropping Pakistan to 2 for 7, when White dived to his left to catch the edge of Younis Khan.

Kamran Akmal was soon run out for 16 after being sent a quick single, having been chasing back eventually by Yousuf and then beaten by McKay's direct hit in his follow through.

White belted a six and a four in an over from Navedul Hasan and scrambled to the finish, bringing up his fifty with a drive over point. He departed on the fourth-last ball - the wicket went to Mohammad Aamer, who returned 3 for 53 - and Brad Haddin helped out with an unbeaten 27 off 14.

Afridi was central in regaining control for Pakistan after the opening burst and gave up only 35 from 10, including a crucial eight-over spell of 2 for 25 after coming on in the bowling Powerplay. He picked up Watson and Marsh while Saeed Ajmal and Malik were also tight, going at slightly more than four an over.

Watson muscled nine boundaries and a six off Naved-ul-Hasan that landed not far from the dressing room

opening ball for four through point. While Watson lit up the innings with 69 off 71 balls and dominated a 100-run stand in 19.5 overs with Shaun Marsh, the chances of a massive total were upset by the frugal Afridi. In the end it didn't matter.

Afridi removed both openers and it was difficult for the hosts to increase the pace until White led the final thrust. White followed his century at the Gabba with 55 off 58 and benefited from delaying the batting Powerplay until the last five overs.

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at midwicket. After five overs he was 34 off 22 - Australia were soon speeding at 65 off 10 - and brought up his fifty from 42 deliveries before accepting a standing ovation.

Yousuf called for the bowling Powerplay as soon as possible and Watson was held back by the spin as Afridi arrived. Afridi struck when Watson tried for another clearance and was well taken by Malik at deep midwicket.

Marsh (41) also fell to Afridi when he tried to hit to the leg side and got a leading edge to long-on in a troubling period for the home side. Ponting (13) lacked fluency for the second match in a row and Australia were 4 for 166 when Michael Clarke fell on 25. White rallied and the bowlers backed up his charge, giving Australia the chance to claim the five-match series in Adelaide on Tuesday.

SCOREBOARD: Table with columns for Bowler, O, M, R, W. Includes players like Afridi, Watson, and Ponting.

PAKISTAN: Table with columns for Bowler, O, M, R, W. Includes players like Butt, Aamer, and Gul.

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ASIF'S SIGNS: Table with columns for Bowler, O, M, R, W. Includes players like Afridi, Watson, and Ponting.

MISSION 100: Table with columns for Bowler, O, M, R, W. Includes players like Afridi, Watson, and Ponting.

Australia were challenged in Brisbane on Friday but they controlled most of match from the moment Watson struck the

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Riyad run continues

FROM PAGE 17 Yuvraj [Singh] told me that it was a good knock although I did not get a hundred. Bhajji [Harbhajan Singh] also said 'well played'. I am not disappointed for missing the century. In the end we got a good total," said Riyad.

Riyad came in to bat with the scoreboard reading 106 for six and the dismissal of Shakib almost left them in a position that crossing 150 would be beyond imagination. But the right-hander kept his cool and got the assistance from his partners to take the score to a respectable 233 runs. Credit must go to him for that he rotated the strike just at the right times.

"After Shakib was out, I tried to bat as long as possible and score as many runs as possible. That was my plan," he informed.

SCOREBOARD: Scoreboard at stumps on the opening day of the second and

final Test between Bangladesh and India at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur on Sunday:

Table with columns for Bowler, O, M, R, W. Includes players like Zaheer, Sharma, and Dhoni.

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Extras: (b-1, nb-1) 2 Total: (For no loss in 13 overs) 69 To bat: Dravid, Tendulkar, Vijay, Yuvraj, Dhoni, Harbhajan, Sharma, Zaheer, Ojha.

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Pakistan offer to host SA in UAE

AFP, Karachi

Pakistan has offered to play South Africa in three Tests, five one-dayers and two Twenty20 matches in the United Arab Emirates later this year, an official said Saturday.

"South Africa were supposed to tour us but because of their security fears they declined to come and that's why we have offered them to play this full series of Tests, one-dayers and Twenty20 at the neutral venue of the Emirates," Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chairman Ijaz Butt told AFP.

Butt said instead of coming to Pakistan, South Africa wanted to play the series on their grounds, which was not cost-effective.

"If we play the series in South Africa, it would have incurred losses to us, so we have offered them to play this full series of Tests, one-dayers and Twenty20 at the neutral venue of the Emirates," Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chairman Ijaz Butt told AFP.

The series would likely to be played in October-November this year.

Pakistan has been a no-go country for foreign teams since the 9-11 attacks on the United States in 2001 and the ensuing war on terror for which the Washington counts Pakistan as an ally.

Selectors inconsistent too

FROM PAGE 17 The best of shape, he looked nervous in both innings which is very understandable.

Then the obvious question is why the selectors chose him for the toughest form of tests instead of getting him used to with a flavour of one-day cricket, which many think he rightfully deserved. And now that he was tested and he failed that test too, does that mean he would not be able to perform again? The selectors and team management thought nought. They came to this realisation that he was not up to the 'standard' they were looking for. Wasn't that a thing to be decided prior to the selection than afterwards?

Of course, they had their plans up their sleeves. Nafees and Zunaed Siddiqui both were picked for the one-down position. Zunaed had been a regular feature in

Bangladesh's batting in Tests for the last two years and he played in the last Test in West Indies in July 2009 too. Then why, in the first place, was Zunaed not considered for the first Test? Even though, he had been struggling for runs in shorter version for some time now, his Test record was pretty good. In fact, he got a score of 78 just two Tests ago.

So, what was this tinkering all about? As if the selectors thought let's give both of them a fair share and see who comes out on top. This sort of wavering attitude is not what you expect from the national selectors when playing at the highest level. The fickle nature of selection policy has had detrimental impact on the careers of many a promising cricketer in past, and let's hope the same doesn't happen with Nafees.

The International Cricket Council relocated Pakistan's 14 matches in the 2011 World Cup to the other host countries, India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka.

New body of BSWA

SPORTS REPORTER

Rezaur Rahman Shohag and Arif Shohel were elected president and general secretary of the Bangladesh Sports Writers' Association (BSWA) on Saturday for a two-year term.

Before the election, the annual general meeting of BSWA was held at the NSC Tower with former general secretary Rafiqul Islam presenting the report. Rakibur Rahman presented the audit report in the meeting with president Sarwar Hossain in chair.

The other new office bearers are: Rafiqul Islam (vice-president), Kamruzzaman Hiru (joint secretary), Hasan Mahmud Babli (treasurer), Morshalin Ahmed (organising secretary), Aminul Islam Liton (office secretary) and Sanaul Haq Khan, Selim Nazrul Haque, Rafiqul Islam Bhuiyan, Arafat Daria, Sikandar Ali and Khairul Islam Shaheen (members).

Man-of-the-match Rajapaksa belted 10 fours as he top-scored for Sri Lanka with 79 off 78 balls and put on 91 in 16 overs for the third wicket with fellow left-hander Rumesh Buddhika at Lincoln Green.

Danishka Gunathillike added an unbeaten 24 from 16 balls at the tail of the innings as Sri Lanka posted 293 for eight from their 50 overs.

South Africa were two wickets down by the seventh over, when rain stopped play and a revised target of 292 in 49 overs was set.

After play resumed Josh Richards (46) and Colin Ackerman (21) put on 50 in 56 balls for the third wicket.

But the fall of Ackerman in the 16th over triggered a collapse from which South Africa never recovered and they were all out for 145 after 36.4 overs with medium-fast Charith Jayampathi taking 4-31.

At Rangiora, Australia batted first against New Zealand and scored 232 for eight with skipper Mitchell Marsh, son of former Australian wicketkeeper Rodney Marsh, top scoring with 53.

New Zealand launched a cautious reply, reaching 26 without loss in 10 overs before Jason Floras made the breakthrough when he bowled Harry Boam who had made just six from 27 balls faced.

New Zealand were eventually all out for 170 in the 44th over, 62 runs short of their target.

Form makes

FROM PAGE 17 "What I realised that I do not have that kind of technical problem. Every cricketer has to go thorough that kind of a patch. Everyone has ups and downs. I learnt a lot from that bad patch. The support staff boosted me very well. I am very thankful to Veeru bhai [Virender Sehwag] because he has done something for me to make me play in the first match," he added.

Ishant also informed that the bowlers' stint with the new bowling consultant Eric Simmons had been good.

He also suggested that the Bangladesh pacers needed to be patient and bowl in the right areas if they wanted to be successful against strong Indian batting line-up.

Asif's signs

FROM PAGE 17 still doing the soul-searching with her poor performance and still struggling to improve her scores. Sharmin has been kept on standby as Sharmin Akhter Ratna, Sadiya Sultana and Tripti Datta are almost set to compete in both individual and team events of 10m air rifles.

Mission 100

FROM PAGE 17 "We were concerned about new venues of the wooden floor gymnasium, boxing stadium, handball stadium and shooting range. But the shooters and handball players have already begun training in the newly-built venue while the wooden floor is scheduled to open tomorrow [Monday] and the boxing ring has already arrived here and it will take a couple of days to be installed," claimed Manu.

"For the last few days, we have been visiting all the camps as well as all venues and inspiring the athletes. It seems to me that they are very much confident of putting their best in the meet. That's why we are dreaming high," said the chef de mission.

Commonwealth gold medalist shooter Asif Hossain Khan will carry the national flag in the march past during the opening ceremony of the Games, informed Manu.

Deputy chef de mission Badal Roy said that the athletes would meet Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on January 26 and the premier might declare awards for winners.

SL, Aus complete semifinals line-up

AFP, Wellington

An aggressive 79 from rising Sri Lankan star Banuka Rajapaksa carried his side to an overwhelming 146-run victory over South Africa in their ICC Under-19 Cricket World Cup quarterfinal here Sunday.

Sri Lanka now play Australia in the second semifinal on Wednesday with giant-killers Pakistan playing the West Indies in the first semifinal on Monday.

Australia qualified with a 62-run win over New Zealand on Sunday, a day after Pakistan knocked out defending champions India with a two-wicket victory and the West Indies beat England by 18 runs.

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Injury forces Safina out

AFP, Melbourne

Russian second seed Dinara Safina's Australian Open campaign ended in misery Sunday when she retired injured during her fourth round clash with countrywoman Maria Kirilenko.

Safina, the runner-up last year, was trailing 4-5 and 30-40 when she pulled out with what appeared to be a left leg injury.

The 23-year-old battled with a back problem in late 2009 and withdrew from the warm-up tournament in Brisbane to receive further treatment, but had said the injury was behind her upon arriving in Melbourne.

She looked in good touch in the first three rounds, winning all her matches in straight sets.

After holding serve in a game that had eight deuces, Safina led 4-2 with a break of serve against Kirilenko, but called for the trainer after the seventh game.

She did not get any treatment, but took some painkillers and played on.

However, she dropped the next two games.

Safina was in obvious discomfort and after netting a weak forehand at 30-all to hand Kirilenko set point, she strode towards the umpire and indicated her night was over.

Anelka fires Chelsea

AFP, Preston

France striker Nicolas Anelka took the plaudits after his goal inspired a 2-0 win at Preston kept Chelsea on course to land the FA Cup for the third time in four seasons.

Anelka set the platform for the Premier League club's fourth round success at Deepdale on Saturday with his fifth goal in four games.

Young strike partner Daniel Sturridge doubled the holders' lead in the second half as Carlo Ancelotti's team saw off Darren Ferguson's Championship outfit.

But it was Anelka's performance which caught the eye of Chelsea assistant manager Ray Wilkins and he was keen to salute the former Arsenal and Real Madrid star.

"He's playing some outstanding football at the minute," Wilkins said. "He's clearly enjoying his football and training."

"He's an outstanding player and hopefully he will carry in this rich vein of scoring form."

Wilkins insisted Chelsea's professional performance against Preston is proof that the west London club are determined to retain the FA Cup they won last May after beating Everton 2-1 in the final.

"I thought our lads were extremely professional," he added. "This is not an easy place to come and the Preston fans really got behind their team."

"But we are the holders and we want to retain it. This is not an easy place to come and the fact that Carlo picked a strong team shows how seriously we are treating the competition."

Del Potro sent packing

FROM PAGE 17 Hingis in 2006 and Jelena Dokic in 2009 also made the quarters -- and earned her a crack at Russian Nadia Petrova for a place in the semifinals.

Petrova, the 19th seed, made the last eight by beating third seed Kuznetsova, continuing her giantkilling ways having already ousted Kim Clijsters.

She won 6-3, 3-6, 6-1 and Kuznetsova admitted she deserved to lose.

"It's very disappointing because I thought I played very well in preparation," she said.

"I was struggling a little bit, I was not good today. I think I deserved to lose."

Zheng's achievement was impressive, with the unseeded 26-year-old upsetting Ukrainian 31st seed Alona Bondarenko 7-6 (7/5), 6-4 as she and Li Na, who plays her fourth round match on

Monday, continue to fly the flag for China.

The victory sets her up against either second seed Dinara Safina or fellow Russian Maria Kirilenko.

Zheng proved to be marginally steadier than the Ukrainian in a match where both women struggled to hold their serves.

"I think Australia is lucky for me because I won my first Grand Slam doubles title in Australia (with Yan Zi)," Zheng said.

"I'm also so happy I'm in the quarter-finals."

Argentina's Del Potro crashed out of contention in a five-set epic with 14th seed Marin Cilic.

The Croatian outlasted an exhausted Del Potro 5-7, 6-4, 7-5, 5-7, 6-3 to earn himself a quarterfinal against either American seventh seed Andy Roddick or former finalist Fernando Gonzalez of Chile.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down. Includes clues like 'Energy', 'Manila', 'Legume', 'Kapital', 'Man of La Mancha', etc.

Cryptogram puzzle grid with letters and numbers. Includes clues like 'RL J L Q N Q M M L N D J L Q', 'Z L Q R Z F U U F Z D B C F W E', etc.

CRYPTOQUIP: Saturday's Cryptogram: WHAT MIGHT YOU NAME A DULL, NERDY PERSON WHO TAKES A VERY, VERY LONG NAP? DRIP VAN WINKLE. Today's Cryptogram Clue: L equals O