



PHOTO: AFP

The South African team poses with the trophy after completing a 5-0 clean sweep of West Indies after a one-wicket win in the fifth one-day at the Queen's Park Oval in Port-of-Spain on Thursday.

Proteas sweep Windies clean

Cricket
AFP, Port of Spain

Half-centuries from Jacques Kallis and J.P. Duminy helped South Africa complete a clean sweep of their One-day International series with West Indies, when they won the fifth and final match by one wicket here on Thursday.

The result meant that South Africa have now swept West Indies 5-0 in each of their last three bilateral ODI series.

Kallis, the Man-of-the-Match, hit five boundaries in the top score of 57 at just a run-a-ball, and Duminy struck just one four in 51 from 75 deliveries, as the South Africans, in pursuit of 253 for victory, reached their target with just two balls to spare on a slow Queen's Park Oval pitch.

Lonwabo Tsotsobe carried the Proteas over the threshold, when he slapped a wide delivery from Kieron Pollard through cover for four.

"It's terrific to have achieved this result, and bounce back from the failure at the Twenty20 World Cup," said South African captain Graeme Smith.

"It was an important time for us as a group of people, and it was important for us to regain the faith of a lot of the public back home."

"I think a lot of the fans back home in South Africa support us through thick and thin, so it is nice to give them all something about which to feel good."

Like last Sunday, the Proteas ran into late trouble, when Charl Langeveldt was caught behind for six off the last ball of the

penultimate over to leave the visitors needing eight from the final over.

But Roelof van der Merwe swung the first ball of the final over from Pollard over square leg for four to ease South Africa's tension before Tsotsobe won it for them three balls later.

"The last few games have been too close for comfort," said Smith. "We have chased on some pretty flat pitches, and West Indies have controlled the games at different times, and we have lost wickets at crucial times."

"But we have held our nerve. Winning is a habit, and when you get into tight games, and you are used to winning, you are able to limp over the line."

West Indies skipper Chris Gayle admitted that his side were in a bit of a rut.

"We seem to be in a bad habit of losing, and when it comes down to these tight situations in matches, we do not know how to handle ourselves," said Gayle.

"All in all, credit must go to South Africa. They played well. We were beaten fair and square. We had our chances, but we did not make use of them."

"It's been tough losing this much. The good thing is we have a few days off to put this behind us, and hopefully, we can get a fresh start in the (forthcoming) Test series."

South Africa had bowled with discipline to restrict West Indies, but Shivnarine Chanderpaul hit the top score of 67 from 104 balls, and Narsingh Deonarine helped himself to a run-a-ball 53 to lead the Windies to 252 for six from their 50 overs.

The visitors then started their chase

steadily, but Smith was caught behind of Dwayne Bravo for 12 in the ninth over.

The South Africans then stumbled, when Hashim Amla, who earned the Man-of-the-Series award for his 402 runs, which made him the most prolific batsman in the series, was run out for 45 in the 14th over, and A.B. de Villiers was caught at deep mid-on of Gayle in the 19th over.

Kallis and Duminy put the Proteas back on course for victory with a stand of 58, but Kallis was dubiously caught behind off Gayle in the 36th over, and Mark Boucher was caught at short third man off Pollard to leave the visitors needing 78 from the last 84 balls.

South Africa lost their way inside the last 10 overs, when four wickets fell for 35 runs from 34 balls, but their last wicket pair held steady.

The two sides now prepare for a series of three Tests, with matches in Trinidad (June 10-14), St. Kitts (June 18-22), and Barbados (June 26-30).

The South Africans start a two-day tour match on Saturday against Trinidad & Tobago at the Frank Worrell ground on the St. Augustine campus of the University of the West Indies.

SCORES IN BRIEF
WEST INDIES: 252 for six in 50 overs (Chanderpaul 67, Deonarine 53; Tsotsobe 2-31, Van der Merwe 1-27)
SOUTH AFRICA: 255 for nine in 49.4 overs (Amla 45, Kallis 57, Duminy 51; Gayle 2-38, Taylor 1-36)
RESULT: South Africa won by one wicket
SERIES: South Africa won five-match series 5-0
MAN-OF-THE-MATCH: Jacques Kallis
MAN-OF-THE-SERIES: Hashim Amla

Stosur hopes for away boost

AFP, Paris

Samantha Stosur believes playing a first Grand Slam final outside her Australian hot house of expectations could work in her favour when she tackles Francesca Schiavone in Saturday's French Open final.

The 26-year-old, looking to become the first Australian woman to win a Grand Slam title since Evonne Goolagong clinched the 1980 Wimbledon crown, starts as favourite against Schiavone, the first Italian woman to make a major final.

And Stosur is convinced that playing her first Grand Slam final here rather than in the Australian Open in Melbourne could work in her favour.

"It's pretty crazy at the moment, so I can't imagine what it would be like in Australia. I don't see the papers and I don't have people coming up to me and recognising me," said Stosur.

"I have made the fourth round at the Australian Open twice and never felt like I performed that badly at home. I have enjoyed the experience although I know some players who have struggled at home

and not had good results.

"So maybe avoiding all the hype helps, maybe it makes a bit of difference."

Stosur, who lives on the Gold Coast, is also hoping that the Australian-style summer temperatures, which have sent Paris into a sweat in the last few days, will also help her quest.

On Friday, it was 28 degrees on the Philippe Chatrier Court at the start of the men's semifinals in early afternoon.

"The weather may be good for me. If the sun shines it will be nice," said Stosur, who hopes her mother, father and two brothers will make it to Paris in time for the final.

Schiavone, meanwhile, hopes the final will prove that there is more to women's tennis than just endless groundstrokes being launched from the baseline.

"Women's tennis is becoming more and more aggressive," said the Italian, one of the few players to still execute a backhand one-handed.

"We have a different way, me, Sam, Justin (Henin). But you are born like this. You can't ask me to serve 200kmh or to hit the forehand flat, because I say, I'm sorry. Everybody's different."

Pushban

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and completed his hat-trick in the 81st minute.

Three minutes later, Idris completed the rout though Chittagong pulled one back in the stoppage time through a strike from Tareq.

With 26 points from 24 matches, Rahmatganj are joint sixth along with Chittagong Mohammedan and Brothers Union, but the old Dhaka outfit are ahead of them on goal difference.

Chittagong Abahani were struck to the eleventh place of the 13-team points table with 21 points.

The third edition of the professional football league ends today through the match between relegated Beanibazar and Muktiyoddha Sangsad at the Sylhet Stadium.

The return of Ronaldo

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But if any of the qualifying pools of the opening stages epitomised the summer's jamboree, it was that containing co-hosts South Korea, hotly-tipped Portugal, outsiders USA and Poland. Many feared the Koreans, under Dutchman Guus Hiddink, would struggle to win a match, let alone escape the group, but they were to embark on a fairytale run that would turn the nation's streets into all-night carnivals. Victory over Poland and a tough draw with USA took them to within touching distance, and a Portuguese humbling at the hands of the Americans had turned the form book on its head. Despite defeat to a Poland side that was already out of contention, USA took second after Korea beat Portugal in a rancorous affair.

Korea's Park Ji-Sung became an instant hero after controlling a 30-yard pass on his chest, hooking the ball over Sérgio Conceição and striking a half-volley through Vítor Baia's legs to

score against nine men after Joao Pinto and Beto had been sent off, sending those inside and outside the group into raptures.

In the knockout stages, England eased past the inform Danes in the rain of Niigata thanks to goals from Michael Owen, Rio Ferdinand and Emile Heskey, raising a nation's already inflated expectations, while Germany quietly stumbled past Paraguay, and Brazil were indebted to keeper Marcos in seeing off a spirited challenge from Belgium.

Senegal, inspired by El Hadji Diouf, continued their fine run with a dramatic golden goal win over the Swedes while the Mexicans descended into petty fouling when bitter rivals USA's 2-0 lead became insurmountable in the closing stages of their encounter. Goals from Brian McBride and Landon Donovan had done the damage as USA's burgeoning reputation as a maturing footballing side grew.

Even extra-time was not enough to separate Spain and Ireland as penalties

LOCAL SNIPPETS

SPORTS REPORTER

FM Syed Mahfuzur Rahman Emon took an early lead in the Six Seasons International chess tournament held at the NSC Tower yesterday.

Emon's second round win over Manodip Dhar of India to move to a maximum two points.

FM Aminul Islam, FM Mohammod Abdul Malek and Minira Veronika are sharing the second place with 1.5 points.

Veronika beat FM Minhazuddin Ahmed Sagar and Amin drew with Malek.

DIVIFOOTBALL
Heavy rain postponed the match between Badda Jagarani Sangsad and Dhaka Wanderers Club that was scheduled to be held at the Bir Shrestha Sepoy Mohammad Mostafa Kamal Stadium.

The match will be bodily shifted and held today at the same venue at 4:00pm.

NATIONAL JUNIOR CHESS
Thirteen players are sharing the lead in the Basic Bank 31st National Junior Chess Championship at the chess federation hall-room yesterday.

Saif, Sharif, Siam, Babu, Sarfat, Shibli, Amena, Sharon, Aeon, Rana, Sagar, Zoar and Sunny have a maximum of two points after two rounds.

Third round games will start today from 3:30pm at the same venue.



PHOTO: AFP

Sweden's Robin Soderling celebrates after beating Czech Tomas Berdych in the French Open semifinals at the Roland Garros Stadium in Paris yesterday. Soderling won 6-3, 6-3, 3-6, 5-7, 6-3.

Soderling in final

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As expected, the final four showdown quickly developed into a deadly exchange of big serves and rasping groundstrokes down both flanks on a sun-bathed Philippe Chatrier centre-court.

Berdych was the first to flinch in the sixth game when he double-faulted on break point allowing Soderling to take a 4-2 lead. The Swede comfortably served out to take the set, the first Berdych had lost in the tournament.

It was more of the same in the second set, but this time it was Soderling who let his concentration slip in the fourth game with a couple of loose shots opening the door for the Czech to break serve for the first time.

Berdych held firm in his next three service games to level the set scores at one apiece.

The match was finely poised with the oncourt temperature soaring and it was

Berdych who kept the momentum going into the third set, grabbing his second break of serve when Soderling double-faulted at 1-1.

Soderling had an immediate chance to break back in the next game but was denied by a Berdych service winner, but two games later it was Berdych's turn to double fault on break point.

The fifth set then moved ahead 5-4, but it was Berdych who finished the set stronger rattling off three games in a row as Soderling began to look the more tired of the two big men.

The Swede struggled to hold his serve at the start of the fourth set while Berdych was holding with ease, but it was the Czech who wilted first dropping his serve in the sixth game to leave Soderling 4-2 up.

That pumped up last year's losing finalist and he comfortably served out twice to force a deciding set.

Rossi wants to drive for Ferrari

INTERNET
Reigning seven-times MotoGP world champion Valentino Rossi, whose present Yamaha contract expires at the end of this season, looks to have ruled himself out of a full-time Ferrari F1 drive -- but has confirmed an interest in driving a third Ferrari.

Third cars are currently not allowed in F1, but Ferrari -- which has a 2010 driver lineup of Fernando Alonso and Felipe Massa -- is pushing a rule change, which would potentially clear the way for Rossi to enter F1.

The Italian admitted he is keen on the idea of taking part in a third Ferrari, but believes the marque should stick to hiring F1 superstars for its top two drivers.

"To have a strong team like Yamaha's (in MotoGP), Ferrari should hire Sebastian Vettel alongside Alonso," Rossi told La Gazzetta dello Sport.

Nat'l badminton takes off

SPORTS REPORTER

Ritu got off to a flying start in the Citycell 30th National Badminton Championship that began at the Wooden Floor Gymnasium in the capital yesterday.

The Bangladesh Railway shuttle took little time to dispatch Doyal of Jhalakathi 21-9, 21-5 in the men's singles competition.

Dhaka's Rakibul beat Ashim of Shariatpur 21-6, 21-19, Pesta of Bogra beat Shah Alam of Gaibandha 21-7, 21-6 while Sathkha's Belal defeated Ruman of Sunamganj 18-21, 21-17, 21-12.

In the other match, Aiman of Gopalganj beat Manikganj's Haris 21-9, 21-9.

Earlier, chairman of the parliamentary committee on youth and sports Zahid Ahsan Rasel inaugurated the tournament. Bangladesh Badminton Federation president Rubaba Dowla was also present on the occasion.

FRENCH OPEN

Williams sisters win doubles crown

AFP, Paris

Serena and Venus Williams clinched the French Open women's doubles title on Friday to become only the third team to hold all four Grand Slam titles at the same time.

The top seeded Americans defeated Slovenia's Katarina Srebotnik and Kveta Peschke of the Czech Republic, the 12th seeds, 6-2, 6-3 to win their second Roland Garros doubles title, and 12th in all.

Martina Navratilova and Pam Shriver (1983-1984) and Gigi Fernandez and Natasha Zvereva (1992-1993) are the only other two teams to hold all four majors at the same time.

The Williams sisters, champions here in 1999, have now captured six of the last eight Grand Slam doubles titles.



PHOTO: COURTESY

Chairman of the parliamentary committee on youth and sports Zahid Ahsan Rasel (C) inaugurates the Citycell 30th National Badminton Championship outside the Wooden Floor Gymnasium yesterday.

Bell steadies

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Robiul Islam from their team at Lord's, struck first ball when he had opener Cook (29), pushing half forward, caught at slip by Junaid Siddique.

SCOREBOARD
Scoreboard at tea on the first day of the second Test between England and Bangladesh at Old Trafford on Friday:
ENGLAND: First innings Strauss c Kayes b Shafiqul 21 Cook c Zunaed b Razzak 29 Trotter b Shafiqul 3 Pietersen st Mushfiqur b Shakib 62 Bell not out 54 Morgan not out 33 Extras: (b-6, lb-4, w-2, nb-1) 13 Total: (For 4 wks in 58 overs) 215 Fall of wickets: 1-44, 2-48, 3-83, 4-153.
To bat: Prior, Swann, Shahzad, Anderson, Finn.
Bowler O M R W Shafiqul 13 2 50 0 Shafiqul 13 2 35 2 Mahmudullah 7 1 15 0 Shakib 15 1 61 1 Razzak 10 1 44 1
BANGLADESH: Tamim Iqbal, Imrul Kayes, Zunaed Siddique, Jahurul Islam, Mohammad Ashraf, Shakib Al Hasan (captain), Mushfiqur Rahim, Mohammad Mahmudullah, Shahadat Hossain, Abdur Razzak, Shafiqul Islam.
Toss: England.
Umpires: Billy Bowden (NZL) and Asoka de Silva (SRI).

Koertzen to retire

Cricket
CRICINFO

Rudi Koertzen, the South African umpire, has announced his retirement from officiating in international cricket: his last Test will be the Pakistan-Australia fixture at Headingley from July 21 to 25. The ICC have added Marais Erasmus, from South Africa, and Rodney Tucker, from Australia, to the Elite Panel of Umpires for 2010-11 to replace Koertzen and Mark Benson, who stepped down from the panel in February.

Koertzen, 61, has officiated in 106 Tests, a record 209 ODIs and 14 Twenty20 internationals. His first international match was the ODI between South Africa and India in Port Elizabeth on December 9, 1992 and he made his Test debut at the same venue three weeks later.

"A distinguished career like Rudi's presents a benchmark for aspirant umpires," ICC chief executive Haroon Lorgat said. "Rudi is a role model for many of the younger-generation umpires and his

distinguished career sets a standard for them to emulate.

"He is one of the most respected umpires in the game and has always been confident and self-motivated yet humble. It is why he has been comfortably able to embrace the core values of the traditional game with the technological advances in recent times."

Koertzen is currently in Zimbabwe, where he is officiating in the tri-series involving the hosts, India and Sri Lanka. "It has been 18 incredible years for me as an international umpire and I have thoroughly enjoyed every bit of it," he said, reflecting on his career. "I feel humbled to have been trusted with this massive responsibility and awarded this great opportunity to see cricket revolutionise, be actively involved in some of the biggest changes, see some of the iconic players of the modern era and be part of some of the most fascinating matches."

One of the new members of the elite panel, Tucker, is from New South Wales and Cricket Australia congratulated him on his promotion.

Barisal College

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the dreaded penalty shootout.

However, the second semifinal was quite unlike the first one as Government Barisal College thumped BAF Shaheen College of Chittagong 4-0 after Toudid gave the winners a lead in the fifth minute. Later, they scored three more goals to ensure a final clash with Notre Dame.