



Shane Watson of Australia (2nd from R) is ecstatic after taking the wicket of Pakistan's Umar Akmal (not in picture) lbw for 5 on the second day of the first MCC Spirit of Cricket Test at Lord's in London yesterday.

Watson causes Pak collapse

Cricket

AFP, London

Shane Watson was Australia's unlikely bowling star as Pakistan collapsed to 141 for nine at tea on the second day of the first Test at Lord's here on Wednesday.

Medium-pace Watson's return of four wickets for 40 runs in seven eventful overs helped leave Pakistan 112 runs behind Australia's first innings 253.

Australia's batsmen had struggled in overcast, swing bowler friendly conditions on Tuesday.

But, with the skies above Lord's remaining grey, Watson took two wickets for no runs in four balls after being brought on by captain Ricky Ponting.

Only Pakistan captain and left-handed opener Salman Butt offered much resistance with a determined 63 in nearly three hours before he was bowled by a Watson inswinger.

The all-rounder's return kept Australia on course for a 13th straight Test win against Pakistan, which would give them the outright record for most successive victories by one country against another, with Sri Lanka having also beaten Bangladesh 12 times in a row.

Ben Hilfenhaus, who did the early damage, took two for 38 in 11 overs and new-ball partner Doug Bollinger two for 37 in 12.

Danish Kaneria was 11 not out and last man Mohammad Asif nought not out.

Pakistan captain Shahid Afridi, playing his first Test for four years, came to the crease with his team in dire straits at 83 for five.

Afridi responded in typical fashion by getting off the mark with a legside glance for four against Watson.

And he followed that up by almost casually flicking Watson off his pads for six into the Grandstand.

Afridi then drove Watson through mid-off and guided him down to the vacant third man area for boundaries.

The counter-attack continued when Afridi, nicked-named 'Boom, Boom' drove Watson over long-off for six.

But Watson had the last laugh when Afridi was out for 31 when he mistimed a drive and was caught by Johnson running round at mid-off.

Afridi hit two sixes and four fours in 15 balls but Pakistan were now 117 for six.

Pakistan were 54 for two, with Umar Amin avoiding a nought in his first Test innings, when bad light stopped play for nearly an hour.

But second ball after the resumption the 20-year-old Amin was out for one when caught behind off a thin edge against Johnson.

The swinging conditions would have been tough for even the likes of experienced Pakistan pair Mohammad Yousuf and Younus Khan to combat.

But in the absence of the duo, left behind following the fall-out from bans imposed by officials after Pakistan's 3-0

Test series loss in Australia earlier this year, debutants Azhar Ali and Amin, in at numbers three and four respectively, managed just 17 runs between them.

Umar Akmal had been a thorn in Australia's side during Pakistan's two Twenty20 wins at Edgbaston last week.

But here he was lbw for five aiming across the line of a straight Watson ball. And brother Kamran fared even worse, lbw for nought when completely deceived by Watson's inswinger to leave Pakistan 83 for five.

In the midst of the slump, Butt went to a 78-ball fifty when he cover-drove Johnson in textbook fashion for his 10th boundary.

Earlier teenage Pakistan left-arm quick Mohammad Aamer took four for 72.

But so few Pakistan batsmen looked like playing an innings of substance comparable to Australia opener Simon Katich's painstaking 80 on Tuesday and Michael Hussey's unbeaten 56.

This two-Test series was being played in England because of security concerns in Pakistan.

SCORES IN BRIEF

AUSTRALIA: First innings 253 all out 76.5 overs (Katich 80, Hussey 56 not out, Clarke 47, Ponting 26; Aamer 4-72, Asif 3-63, Kaneria 2-49)

PAKISTAN: First innings 141 for 9 in 39 overs (Butt 63, Afridi 31, Azhar 16; Watson 4-40, Hilfenhaus 2-37, Bollinger 2-38)

Age-Group Swimming from today

SPORTS REPORTER

The BRB Cables 26th National Age-Group Swimming Championships get underway at the National Swimming Complex in Mirpur today.

Some 634 swimmers including 170 girls from 70 district sports associations, swimming clubs, BKSP and Ansar are to compete in 100 events, said acting general secretary of the Bangladesh Swimming Federation (BSF) Jasim Uddin Khasru at a press conference at the National Sports Council conference room yesterday. The participants will fight in 12 different age groups -- six each for boys and girls.

Khasru informed that sponsors BRB Cables would provide Tk 5 lakh out of an estimated budget of Tk 13 lakh. ATM Enamul Haque, senior marketing officer of BRB Cables, hoped for a successful completion of the event and promised to keep assisting the federation in future.

Handball course ends

SPORTS REPORTER

A month-long handball training programme for school kids ended at the Handball Stadium yesterday.

Around one hundred under-12 boys from Sunny Dale, South Point, Summer Field, Green Herald, Scholastica, Oxford International, St. Gregory's, Willes Little Flower, Ideal Banasree, Notre Dame, Dhanmondi Tutorial, Aparajeyo Bangladesh and Narinda Govt. High School took part in the training that started on June 15.

Bangladesh Handball Federation president AKM Nurul Fazle Bulbul distributed certificates among the participants.

Premier kabaddi

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Rifles, Bangladesh Police and Azad Sporting Club won their respective matches of the Pubali Bank 12th Premier Division Kabaddi League at the kabaddi court yesterday.

Rifles thrashed Jatrabari 61-9, Police crushed Jurain Janata Club 44-12 and Azad defeated Dilkusha SC 31-23.

What to WATCH
TEN Sports & SuperSport5
Pakistan v Australia
First Test, Day Three
Live from 3:30pm

DAY'S EVENT
Premier Div Super League Hockey
Mohammedan v Ajax
Time: 4:00pm
Venue: Maulana Bhasani National Hockey Stadium

Cricket comes to soccer's rescue

INTERNET

Cricket could emerge as an unlikely saviour of South Africa's World Cup football stadiums with the decision by Cricket South Africa to stage a Twenty20 international at the Moses Mabhida stadium in Durban.

South Africa underwent a massive building programme in an effort to make the country ready to host the month-long football extravaganza with the construction of five new stadiums while a further five underwent varying degrees of renovation.

There are concerns that following the tournament that concluded with Spain lifting the trophy for the first time on Sunday, the stadiums would become obsolete.

However, the decision to host a Twenty20 match between South Africa and India at the Durban venue next January could open the way for other soccer stadiums to be utilised in a similar capacity.

"The game between South Africa and India is important for us to be able to take cricket to everyone," CSA chief executive Gerald Majola said.

"We would like to utilise some of the soccer stadiums that were used during the World Cup to help us in that effort," he said.

Majola added that South Africa could benefit by the use of more stadiums to extend the domestic cricket season with an eye on setting

up its own version of the lucrative Indian Premier League Twenty20 tournament.

"We can't set up our own IPL because currently there is no window," he explained.

"We would like to see if it is possible to play at the Royal Bafokeng Stadium in Rustenburg and a few other soccer grounds because we would be able to extend our season into August but it is important to see what the viability of the grounds are."

Currently, the Durban stadium falls short of meeting the International Cricket Council's minimum playing area requirement but Majola said that the addition of an athletics track would help to increase the space available.

Majola added that if the ground could reach ICC playing regulations, the CSA would look into gaining full test status for the Moses Mabhida Stadium.

In a clear indication that more cricket could be played at the ground, the CSA has decided to build a permanent pitch at the ground as opposed to using a drop-in one for January's match.

"Not all grounds can be used for tests but for Twenty20 internationals, which attract huge grounds, it would certainly be an option," Majola said.

Mike Sutcliffe, Durban's municipal manager, said that the staging of the international was part of the city's long-term plan to make the stadium sustainable.

Sanath sidelined, Murali stays

Cricket

CRICINFO

Sanath Jayasuriya has received another blow after being left out of the 20 players Sri Lanka Cricket offered central contracts for the current year. Muttiah Muralidaran, who will retire from Tests at the end of the first game against India at Galle on July 22, has been retained in the top category.

Jayasuriya, 41, who became a permanent fixture in the Sri Lanka side after playing a key role in the 1996 World Cup, found himself dropped from the list. The veteran of 110 Tests and 444 ODIs has stated that he would like to play until the 2011 World Cup before finally calling it quits. However, his recent batting form has been poor. In the World Twenty20 in the West Indies he averaged only 3.75 from six matches and in his last six ODI matches his highest score was 31.

"We had discussions over the last few weeks with senior players, Sri Lanka Cricket, selectors and team management to try and put a value on the national contracts," Sri Lanka's chairman of selectors Aravinda de Silva said. "In that regard we decided we will try and reduce the number of national contracted players to 20 rather than have one of over 30 which are currently in existence. We felt that having that number of players will give us the cream to be signed up on a contract for the national squad."

"The contracts are worked out on the previous year's performances and in Sanath's case, since he had not performed up to expectations, we decided to leave him out. We also allowed him to go to England and play some county cricket to see how he performs. As I've said before we haven't let either Chaminda Vaas or Muralidaran out of our minds for the World Cup."

De Silva said that when the contracts were done and due to be signed in March no one knew that Muralidaran was going to retire. "To be fair by Murali he mentioned to us that we could leave him out of the contract and consider him only for the one-dayers if we require him, which I have basically from our side told him that we definitely require him for the World Cup," de Silva said.

The other contracted players are: Nuwan Kulasekara (Category Two), Angelo Mathews (Category Three), Upul Tharanga, Thilan Thushara, Rangana Herath, Prasanna Jayawardene, Ajantha Mendis, Chamara Kapugedera, Lasith Malinga, Thilina Kandamby (Category Four), Dilhara Fernando, Chanaka Welagedara, Tharanga Paranavitana (Category Five).

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ous campaign think that the same winning habit can be made possible with the Tigers ahead of the 2011 event. In fact, it can be even better if they win against the likes of New Zealand or West Indies at home before the tournament begins.

But Bashir is skeptical about finding new players for the World Cup ahead.

"I see very little chance of that happening because in the past two years, player production hasn't been too good and backups are not in place. We have a few options but I still think this current team is good enough and talented enough to produce the goods in the World Cup," said Bashir.

Mendis mauls tourists

CRICINFO

Yuvraj Singh made optimum use of the tour game to ensure his place at No. 6 in the Test line-up, scoring an entertaining and assured century, but could not save the Indians the embarrassment of not making the follow-on mark against the Sri Lanka Board Presidents' XI. Ajantha Mendis gave the selectors enough reasons to pick him for the second Test, taking the wickets of Sachin Tendulkar, VVS Laxman and Gautam Gambhir among his six.

That the Indians could last only 64.2 overs will add more concern on a tour that has brought them much bad news. Two of their first-choice bowlers have gone back to India, one is down with fever, the rest of the bowlers struggled, and when their turn came to bat they could last just two sessions.

Twin strikes from Chanaka Welagedara and Mendis had left the Indians at a precarious 80 for 4, but Yuvraj took the initiative in attacking Mendis and added 143 with Gautam Gambhir. Gambhir got three lives, played well otherwise, but missed out on a century. Another collapse ensued, and Yuvraj fought cramps, shielded Ishant Sharma, but could not see the Indians through to the follow-on mark.

SCORES IN BRIEF

SL PRESIDENT'S XI: First innings 514-9 declared (Tharanga 110, Thirimanne 66, Kandamby 101, Samaraweera 102; Ojha 5-153, Mishra 2-125)

INDIA: First innings 291 all out (Gambhir 89, Yuvraj 118; Mendis 6-67, Welagedara 2-45, Senanayake 2-94)

Flower sees Gilly in Kieswetter

Cricket

AFP, London

Andy Flower still believes Craig Kieswetter can be England's answer to Adam Gilchrist despite his recent run of low scores in one-day internationals.

Australia great Gilchrist, who retired from international cricket two years ago, was both a dashing opener in the one-day format, capable of big scores as well as a sound gloveman, and increased the pressure on his fellow keepers to match his runs in the Test arena too.

Many countries have tried and failed to find an equivalent to Gilchrist but England think they may be onto something with the South Africa born Kieswetter.

The 22-year-old, who plays for Somerset, struck a hundred in only his third one-day international and made his name globally with a man-of-the-match winning 63 in England's World Twenty20 final win against Australia in Barbados in May.

But given a chance to open in the one-day, as well as Twenty20 format, in England this season, the Somerset batsman has struggled for runs.

He could only manage 69 in five one-day innings against Australia, whose quicks repeatedly burst through his defences while in three matches against the somewhat less intimidating Bangladesh attack he was out for 32, 20 and nought in a series England wrapped up 2-1 at Edgbaston on Monday.

But England coach Flower intends to keep faith with

Kieswetter, who is set to feature in September's home one-day series against Pakistan and is still on course to be in the squad for next year's World Cup in Asia.

"He's had an interesting time of it recently, scoring a hundred in his third ODI, getting man of the match in the World Twenty20 final, being a World Cup winner," said Flower, himself once a wicketkeeper/batsman with Zimbabwe.

"A lot of English players haven't had that, so he's up there doing that and achieving things but then he's had a bit of hard one-day series."

"I think international cricket can do that to you. It can teach you some lessons and perhaps expose a few doubts."

"I think in the long run for Craig it might be a very healthy thing to have happened, in that by the time he plays for England again, he'll need to make his package stronger."

Kieswetter has said he sees his role as scoring quickly at the start of the innings and Flower added he saw similarities with both dynamic Sri Lanka opener Sanath Jayasuriya and Gilchrist.

"I don't really use the word pinch-hitter myself, but he's an aggressive opening batsman for us, pretty much in the mould of Jayasuriya or Gilchrist," Flower explained.

"He's very, very talented and he hits the ball beautifully, as well as I've ever seen anyone hit the ball."

"But he's got to work out how to score runs."

"He's got a good coach at Somerset in Andy Hurrey, and some good people to work with like Marcus Trescothick and, in our set-up, Graham Gooch (both former England

openers). They might help, but it's up to Craig to find his method."

Someone who has taken his chance recently is Ravi Bopara.

School kho kho beings today

SPORTS REPORTER

The 6th School Kho Kho Tournament, jointly sponsored by First Security Islami Bank Ltd and J-One Lubricants, begins at the outer stadium next to the Bangabandhu National Stadium today.

A total of 25 school -- boys and girls -- teams will take part in the meet, revealed the organisers at a press conference at the Bangladesh Olympic Association Auditorium yesterday.

Siddheshwary Boys' High School take on Rahmattullah Model High School on the opening day.

Fans welcome

FROM PAGE 17

Uruguay's run to fourth place in the tournament was one of the surprises of the World Cup, giving the small South American nation its best showing in four decades.

Patricia Rodriguez, 24, wrapped in a Uruguayan flag and with her face painted, was undeterred by the chilly conditions.

"I cannot feel my feet because of the cold, but the only thing that matters today is showing the players we are proud of them and to say thanks," she said.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 Frilly, in a way
5 Silent
8 Carey or Barry-more
12 Soprano's solo
13 Raw rock
14 Libertine
15 "Don't touch" warning of a sort
17 Knitter's need
18 Put into words
19 Store sign abbr.
20 Seafood entree
21 "— good deed"
22 Four qts.
23 Mad
26 Dealer in decks
30 Oodles
31 Aries
32 Aviation-related
33 Tremble
35 Sleep soundly?
36 Lummox
37 — relief
38 Nick

DOWN
2 Vicinity
3 Urban area
4 Shri! bark
5 Ballerina Shearer
6 Coffee gear
7 Encountered
8 Washes without water
9 Bellow
10 Multi-national money
11 Make one's way
16 Sailor's greeting
20 Spotted
21 Car: "in the shop": the ship: —

Solution time: 21 mins.

OVA	BOW	EPEE	
HILT	OOH	LAVA	
MEOW	APE	EWER	
SWEEP	SLAV		
LAS	PREENS		
BAFFLED	ENDUE		
ABET	COB	TIDE	
LETHE	TIGHTEN		
LLANOS	BAH		
MARG	ION	OLLY	
UTAH	LYE	REAL	
GENT	LOW	EW	

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CRYPTOQUIP

AJL VUJF UX OIUEI MZFHP
LHZX WHMHEKP KIH NPH AV
DAAL DWZFFZW IZRUKP:
"WRRHJ OUKIANK Z EJZNPH."

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: AS HE MADE ITALIAN PASTA SAUCE TURN INTO SOMETHING ELSE, THE MAGICIAN CRIED "PESTO CHANGO!"
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: A equals O