



SIX-STAR NORTH: Australia off-spinner Marcus North (C) celebrates after dismissing Pakistan's Umar Amin (not in picture) on the fourth day of the first Test at Lord's in London yesterday.

India hope to end 17-year drought

Cricket

AFP, Galle

India on Sunday embark on a third Test series in two years against Sri Lanka, with the world's top-rated side hoping to end their 17-year drought in the island nation.

The Indians have not won a Test series in Sri Lanka since a 1-0 success by Mohammad Azharuddin's team in 1993, despite playing on similar slow wickets at home.

India lost 2-1 the last time they played in Sri Lanka, in August 2008, but gained revenge with a 2-0 victory at home a year later that propelled Mahendra Singh Dhoni's men to the top of the official Test rankings.

India's new-found love for Test cricket over the more lucrative one-day matches saw them pencil in the three-Test series against Sri Lanka -- and another chance to defend their ranking.

It was an offer too good to refuse for Sri Lanka, whose only scheduled Test series this year would have been at home against the West Indies in November.

"The boys were desperate to play Test cricket, which is the pinnacle of the sport, and I am grateful that India agreed to this series," Sri Lanka captain Kumar Sangakkara said.

Sri Lanka, currently fourth in the Test rankings behind India, Australia and South Africa, are hoping to showcase their prowess in home conditions, where they have proved almost invincible.

The Sri Lankans have won eight of their last nine series at home, the only setback coming in 2006, when Pakistan won a two-match series 1-0.

Their success has mainly been down to the prolific work by world bowling record holder Muttiah Muralitharan, backed by a strong batting line-up led by Sangakkara and former captain Mahela Jayawardene.

Off-spinner Muralitharan, 38, who will quit the five-day game after the first Test, needs just eight more scalps to reach the unprecedented tally of 800 Test wickets, adding to a record 515 in one-day matches.

India have not lost a Test match at home to Sri Lanka, but they know the Sri Lankans are a very different proposition on their own patch.

"We know the past has not been very good, but we want to look towards the future," said Dhoni, turning out for national duty just two weeks after getting

married.

"We have played Sri Lanka so much in the last few years that we know their strengths and weaknesses and hopefully we can exploit that. Sri Lanka are a strong team at home, but we have the ability to win."

India are bolstered by the return of batting superstar Sachin Tendulkar, who missed last month's Asia Cup limited-overs tournament in Sri Lanka, which Dhoni's men won beating the hosts in the final.

Also back are the seasoned trio of Rahul Dravid, Venkatesh Laxman and Yuvraj Singh to complete a formidable middle-order to follow openers Virender Sehwag and Gautam Gambhir.

But injuries to pace spearheads Zaheer Khan and Shanthakumaran Sreesanth have blunted India's bowling attack, leaving off-spinner Harbhajan Singh to shoulder the burden.

The Galle International Stadium has happy memories for Sehwag, whose unbeaten double-century inspired India to a massive 170-run victory two years ago.

The action then shifts to Colombo, where the second Test will be played at the Sinhalese sports club from July 26, and the third at the P. Sara Oval from August 3.



Asif Hossain Khan (R) shoots to pick up gold in the 10m air rifle event of the 3rd National Air Gun Championship at the National Shooting Complex in Gulshan yesterday.

Tigers level

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any maidens. Jahurul Islam moved along patiently to 34, but perished while trying to pull Andrew White, top edging to short third man. The pair had added 84 for the third wicket.

Bangladesh now head to Scotland to play two one-off ODIs against Scotland and Netherlands in Glasgow.

SCORES IN BRIEF

IRELAND: 189 for 9 (Wilson 60, N O'Brien 27, White 24, Mooney 28; Shafiq 4-55, Shakib 2-21)

BANGLADESH: 191 for 4 in 37.3 overs (Tamim 74, Junaed 13, Jahurul 34, Shakib 33 not out, Mushfiqur 13 not out)

Result: Bangladesh won by 6 wickets.

Man-of-the-match: Shafiqur Islam.

Positive Shamoli

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"But we can take one step at a time and what's the harm in hoping for better days?" he added.

Another former national player and coach -- Shafiqul Islam Manik -- pointed out that there's no lack of sponsors if one sees the amount of money spent on the quizzes and other programmes concerning the World Cup.

"I see there's no lack of money from sponsors for this World Cup. Everyone is interested so we can't say there's no finance for football," said Manik.

Shahin, a hawkers' supervisor, won the first prize (Toshiba washing machine) in the raffle draw held for the audience. The second prize (21" Toshin colour TV) went to Golam Sabbir Ahmed.

The Daily Star-Rangs Toshiba World Cup Quiz con-

cluded with the bumper round after draws were held in Barisal, Chittagong, Rajshahi, Khulna and Sylhet since June 2.

BUMPER WINNERS
FIRST PRIZE
Shamoli Parvin
House-3 DUJP Plot, Road 2/A
Line 2/A, 12/D Mirpur, Dhaka
SECOND PRIZE
Hamida Akhtar
1253, Mohammadbagh,
Dhaka-1362
THIRD PRIZE
Nafisa Khanam
Road-7, House-7, Block-F
Banani, Dhaka
FOURTH PRIZE
Shilpi Akhtar
192/C, South Goran, Dhaka
FIFTH PRIZE
Md Taslim
63, Shantinagar, Dhaka

CORRECT ANSWERS
1. Who was the highest scorer in 2002 World Cup?
Answer: Ronaldo

- Who headed in the last goal of the 2006 World Cup?
Answer: Materazzi
- How many teams participated in the 1994 World Cup?
Answer: 24
- What was the name of the official ball of 1970 World Cup?
Answer: Telstar
- Who is this player?
Answer: David Villa

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

Australia take 1-0 lead

Cricket

AFP, London

Part-time spinner Marcus North stunned record-chasing Pakistan with a maiden six-wicket haul as Australia won the first Test by 150 runs here on Friday.

North took six wickets for 55 runs in 18.1 overs as Australia, in the first neutral Test played in England since 1912, won with more than a day to spare.

Pakistan chasing a target of 440 that would have surpassed the highest Test fourth innings victory total of 418 for seven made by the West Indies against Australia in Antigua in 2002/03, were bowled out for 289 before tea on the fourth day.

Victory gave Australia a record 13th straight successive Test victory over the same opponent, although Sri Lanka's run of 12 wins in a row over Bangladesh is also still ongoing.

It also put them 1-0 up in this two-match series ahead of the second Test at Headingley starting Wednesday.

Pakistan were still in the game, albeit facing a tough task, at 186 for two with vice-captain and left-handed opener Salman Butt on 92 when North struck first ball after being brought on shortly before lunch.

North began with a seemingly wayward ball that drifted down the legside.

However, Butt overbalanced out of his crease and was smartly stumped by debutant wicketkeeper Tim Paine.

Butt, whose 63 was the one contribution of note in Pakistan's meagre first innings 148, had attacked when given the chance, with 15 boundaries, as well as defending correctly when required in nearly four hours at the crease.

Few other Pakistan batsmen had so far suggested they were capable of achieving a similar balance.

Umar Akmal hoisted North for six but, trying to cut, edged to Michael Clarke at slip and was out for an insubstantial 22.

Pakistan were 216 for four at lunch, with Umar Amin - one of four debutants in the match - 31 not out.

But the left-hander had added just two to his score when, after the interval, he was caught at short-leg by Simon Katich to give North, primarily a middle-order batsman, his third wicket.

And, four balls later, 227 for five became 229 for six when Pakistan captain Shahid Afridi, on two, tried to slog North over midwicket but was instead caught on the boundary by Michael Hussey.

Even allowing for the fact this was Afridi's first Test in four years and his preference for big-hitting, the shot appeared highly irresponsible, especially given his role as captain of a largely inexperienced side.

Pakistan were now all but out of the game, needing 211 more runs with wicketkeeper Kamran Akmal the only recognised batsman yet to be dismissed. Both Kamran and Mohammad Aamer struck boundaries off North and debutant leg-spinner Steven Smith during a stand of 54.

But the sense was they were merely delaying the inevitable for a Pakistan side without senior batsmen Mohammad Yousuf and Younus Khan, suspended following the 3-0 series loss in Australia earlier this year.

And so it proved when Kamran (46), hitting across the line, was bowled by Smith and shortly afterwards Aamer holed out to give North his first five-wicket Test haul.

North ended the game when he had

Danish Kaneria caught by Australia captain Ricky Ponting.

Pakistan resumed on their overnight score of 114 for one.

Butt was 58 not out and debutant Azhar Ali 28 not out.

Left-arm quick Mitchell Johnson gave Butt width outside off-stump and the batsman responded with four fours.

Johnson was replaced by medium pacer Shane Watson, who took a Test-best five for 40 during Pakistan's first innings.

But it was Ben Hilfenhaus who had Al pushing outside off-stump, caught behind for 42 to end a watchful two-hour innings.

Australia, in a match where batsmen found runs tough to come by, were indebted to opener Katich for scores of 80 and 83.

Katich was named Australia's man-of-the-match, with Butt winning the equivalent Pakistan award.

This series is 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 148 all out in 40.5 overs (Butt 63, Afridi 31, Azhar 16, Kaneria 14; Watson 5-40, Hilfenhaus 2-37, Bollinger 2-38)

AUSTRALIA: Second innings 334 all out in 91 overs (Katich 83, Hilfenhaus 56 not out, Paine 47, Watson 31, Johnson 30; Gul 4-61, Asif 3-77, Kaneria 2-74)

PAKISTAN: Second innings 289 (Butt 92, Akmal 46, Azhar 42; North 6-55, Smith 3-51)

Result: Australia won by 150 runs.
Players-of-the-match: Simon Katich (Australia) and Salman Butt (Pakistan)

Abahani

FROM PAGE 17
with Pakistani Modasser Ali Khan through a field goal.

After the lead, the Dhanmondi-based outfit did not look back and Modasser doubled the advantage in the 15th minute before Ehsan Rana made it 3-0 through another field goal.

Then the Pakistani penalty corner specialist Sohail Abbas converted one, to extend the margin just one minute before the break.

Abbas, in the second half, converted another penalty corner to seal the fate of the game.

Paul transfer

FROM PAGE 17
next few days we will be able to confirm news that the admirable Paul will be part of the club of the most loved and charismatic animals of the Madrid Zoo."

However, Oberhausen officials have rejected the bid, claiming he is not for sale. "We are not in contact with Madrid Zoo. And we know nothing about swapping Paul for another animal or him going to Madrid Zoo for a transfer sum," Sea Life spokeswoman Tanja Munzig said.

One Spanish businessman has already offered \$38,000 to bring him to Spain, but he looks set to remain in Germany for the rest of his days.

More records

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records in 100m backstroke (1:05:34 minutes) and 400m individual medley (5:11:09 minutes).

Jewel now has seven gold medals with five national records.

Muslima Khatun also from Ansar set new records in 400m individual medley (6:28:59 minutes) and 200m individual medley (3:07:90 minutes) under the 15-17 age group.

With the feats from Nazma, Jewel and Muslima, Ansar overtook table-toppers BKSP to stay top with 34 gold, 24 silver and 18 bronze and BSKP slipped to second position to have 32 gold, 31 silver and 25 bronze.

Tourists vow to spoil Murali's finale

Cricket

AFP, Galle

India are determined not to join the party as Sri Lanka celebrate world record wicket taker Muttiah Muralitharan's final Test appearance in Galle from Sunday.

The off-spinner, 38, will retire after the opening contest of the three-match series at the Galle International Stadium, in which he needs eight scalps to reach the unprecedented 800-wicket mark in Test cricket.

Local fans want Muralitharan to claim those eight wickets and lead Sri Lanka to victory in what will be a fitting end to a remarkable, but controversial, 18-year Test career.

Afridi to retire

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Pakistan stay in Britain for four Tests against England and Afridi said vice-captain Salman Butt, who top-scored in both Pakistan innings at Lord's with 63 and 92, should take over the captaincy.

"Salman is showing his maturity. He's good enough to take over this team as captain."

Yawar Saeed, the Pakistan tour manager, told AFP: "Yes, he (Afridi) has told us he is not feeling comfortable with the injury and has told us he doesn't want to play (Tests) but we will talk to him and then decide."

However, Pakistan coach Waqar Younis appeared to have already accepted Afridi's decision to call time on his Test career.

"He hasn't played a Test for a long time," Waqar told Sky Sports.

"He feels he doesn't fit into this and for the best interests of the team he will step down."

"He believes himself he can't (go on) and it's hard to pressure him," the former

However, Indian captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni said his world number one team will not allow Muralitharan -- who is commonly known as Murali -- to have it all his way.

"Good luck to Murali, but we are here to win," said Dhoni, who teams up with the Sri Lankan in the Twenty20 Indian Premier League for current champions Chennai Super Kings.

"We all know Murali is a great bowler and his achievements speak for themselves. More importantly, he is also a great human being and I cherish his friendship."

"However, this is Test cricket and we do not intend to give our wickets easily. Our batsmen would like not to give him the opportunity to reach 800

wickets during the first Test."

The 132-Test veteran, the most successful bowler in history with record hauls in both Test (792) and one-day (515) cricket, said last week he was retiring from the longer version since he had nothing left to strive for.

Fine return

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having scored 682.6 as he did miserably compared to his national championship where he scored 693.2 to win the gold.

Compared to the national championship, Asif slightly improved his total score as he then bagged silver with a score of 689.4.

In the men's 10m air rifles team event, Asif's pairing with Samir Bux from Chittagong Rifles Club also won the gold medal with a total score of 1169 while BKSP Shooting Club's Shovon Chowdhury and Abdullah Hel Baki clinched silverscore 1162.

Sharmin Akhter Ratna, who lost her 10m air rifle crown to Sabrina Sultana in the national event, bettered her performance having scored 493.4 out of 509 to win gold medal in her pet event while Tripti Datta narrowly missed the gold with a total score of 492.9.

Ratna, gold medalist in the SA Games and the Commonwealth Shooting Championship, had earlier scored 489.9 in the Nationals to finish behind Sabrina.

Sharmin Akhter, also an SA Games gold medalist, had to be content with a bronze medal with a score of 489.1.

Like Asif, it was also double delight for Ratna. She teamed up with Nahid Sultana from Ansar VDP Shooting Club won women's 10m air rifles team event having scored 767 points.

Afsana Ashkar Trina and Nahid Sultana from Army Shooting Club won silver with a score of 765 while Narayanganj's Suraiya Akhter and Alo Sarkar Moni had to settle for a bronze.



A colourful rally in connection with The Daily Star-Rangs Toshiba World Cup Quiz Bumper Round draw was brought out in the city yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR