

Aussies avert ignominy

Cricket

AFP, Brisbane

Australia avoided an unwanted record as they cruised to a comprehensive eight-wicket win over Sri Lanka in the third and final one-day international at Brisbane's Gabba ground on Sunday.

Staring at a record eighth straight international defeat, the Australians skittled Sri Lanka for 115 off 32 overs and rattled up the winning score of 119 for two off just 21.4 overs to canter home in the dead rubber match.

Despite the big defeat Sri Lanka return home having won their first series in Australia, after victories in Melbourne and Sydney.

Paceman Clint McKay put in a man-of-the-match performance with five for 33 off nine overs, supported by giant newcomer Mitchell Starc's four for 27 off nine to rip through the Sri Lankan innings.

Michael Clarke, standing in for skipper Ricky Ponting who was rested ahead of this month's Ashes series, hit the winning runs in an unbeaten 50, with Mike Hussey six not out.

The Australians lost only the wickets of openers Shane Watson and Brad Haddin in easing to victory over the lacklustre Sri Lankans.

Watson was out for 15 as he tried to steer a single to third man and instead picked out Angelo Mathews at slip off Dilhara Fernando in the sixth over.

Haddin top-edged a hook shot and was caught and bowled by Fernando for 31 with Australia 32 runs away from victory.

It was the young duo of McKay and Starc who wrecked the Sri Lankan innings, both bowlers enjoying the bounce and movement of the pitch, where the opening Ashes Test with England will be played in 18 days' time.

Only Chamara Silva (33) and Upul Tharanga (28) showed any resistance, while skipper Kumar Sangakkara and Mahela Jayawardene made ducks.

Tillakaratne Dilshan was out in the third over, finding Hussey at forward square leg for an easy catch off McKay for one.

Sangakkara followed four balls later with a faint edge off McKay to wicketkeeper Haddin for a duck.

McKay, in a red hot spell on the seaming Gabba pitch, sent Jayawardene on his way without scoring, after a flying catch at second slip by Cameron White.

In eight balls, McKay tore through the Sri Lankan top order with a burst of three wickets for no runs.

Watson removed Sydney ODI top-scorer Tharanga leg before wicket for 28 off 53 balls in the 14th over to leave Sri Lanka

at 50 for four.

Starc got his first ODI wicket when he bowled Melbourne hero Angelo Mathews off an inside edge for nine in the 22nd over.

Starc, who has only played 10 first-class games, then got one to lift and Jeevan Mendis fended a catch to Haddin for five for the giant left-armed second wicket.

Starc ended Silva's 72-ball vigil, bowling him off an edge to leave the Sri Lankans tottering at 95 for seven in the 28th over.

McKay picked up his fourth wicket when Thisara Perera was well caught by Steven Smith, spinning around at backward point to get under the swirling ball.

Suraj Randiv was McKay's fifth victim when he was bowled for seven attempting a big hit, while Lasith Malinga was the last man out caught in the deep to give Starc his fourth scalp.

Malinga was named man of the series while a stiff and sore Muttiah Muralitharan was rested from the final ODI as a precaution.

SCORES IN BRIEF
SRI LANKA: 115 (Tharanga 28, Silva 33, Mathews 9; McKay 5-33, Starc 4-27)
AUSTRALIA: 119 for 2 (Watson 15, Haddin 31, Clarke 50 not out 5; Fernando 2-47)
Result: Australia won by 8 wickets and Sri Lanka clinched series 2-1.
Man-of-the-match: Clint McKay.
Man-of-the-series: Lasith Malinga.



Clint McKay (L) of Australia celebrates taking the wicket of Tillakaratne Dilshan (R) of Sri Lanka during the third and final ODI at the Gabba in Brisbane yesterday.

Martin wrecks

FROM PAGE 17
the dressing room, where his teammates gave him a standing ovation.

Vettori achieved a personal milestone on 38, as he became the third all-rounder after Ian Botham of England and India's Kapil Dev to complete the Test double of 4,000 runs and 300 wickets.

Williamson's marathon knock came to an end when he edged to Laxman at first slip off Ojha.

SCORES IN BRIEF
INDIA: First innings 48 (Gambhir 21, Sehwaig 173, Dravid 104, Tendulkar 40, Laxman 40, Harbhajan 69; Vettori 4-118, Patel 3-135)
NEW ZEALAND: 459 (McCullum 65, Taylor 56, Ryder 103, Williamson 131, Vettori 41, Hopkins 14, Patel 14; Zaheer 2-70, Sreesanth 2-88, Ojha 4-107)
INDIA: Second innings 82 for 6 in 40 overs (Tendulkar 12, Laxman 34 not out, Dhoni 22; Martin 5-25)

Pakistan eye

FROM PAGE 17
"We obviously want to win the series, but you also want to see which players are available before the World Cup because this is our last chance to play on sub-continent type of pitches here," said Van Zyl.

India, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh jointly host the World Cup from February 19 to April 2 next year.

TEAMS
PAKISTAN (from): Shahid Afridi (captain), Abdul Razzaq, Asad Shafiq, Imran Farhat, Fawad Alam, Mohammad Hafeez, Misbahul Haq, Abdur Rehman, Saeed Ajmal, Shahzaib Hasan, Shoaib Akhtar, Tanvir Ahmed, Umar Akmal, Umar Gul, Wahab Riaz, Younis Khan, Zulqarnain Haider, Mohammad Yousuf.

SOUTH AFRICA (from): Graeme Smith (captain), Hashim Alma, AB de Villiers, Johan Botha, JP Duminy, Colin Ingram, Jacques Kallis, Charl Langeveldt, David Miller, Albie Morkel, Morne Morkel, Wayne Parnell, Robin Peterson, Dale Steyn, Rusty Theron, Lonwabo Tsotsobe.

Kaneria not picked

Cricket

AFP, Dubai

Pakistan left Danish Kaneria out of their Test squad after cricket authorities did not clear the leg-spinner for the two Test series against South Africa, official said Sunday.

"PCB did not give clearance to Kaneria so now I will meet the Test captain [Misbahul Haq] and coach [Waqar Younis] to decide whether they need a replacement or not," chief selector Mohsin Khan told AFP following the Pakistan Cricket Board move.

Mohsin did not elaborate on why Kaneria was excluded from the squad.

Four players -- Mohammad Yousuf, Taufiq Umar, Mohammad Sami and Azhar Ali -- join the Pakistan squad in Dubai on Monday. Pakistan, who lost the two Twenty20 matches, are level at 2-2 with South Africa in the one-day series.

The final one-day match will be played in Dubai on Monday before the Test series starts.

The 29-year-old Kaneria was earlier named in the Test squad for the series starting with the first match in Dubai from November 12.

The second Test will be played in Abu Dhabi from November 20. The series was shifted to United Arab Emirates because of security fears in Pakistan.

Kaneria was dropped by Pakistan early in

the series against England after he took just one wicket for 171 in the second Test at Nottingham.

Kaneria and his Essex team-mate Mervyn Westfield were under investigation for bowling deliberate no-balls and wides in a Pro40 win against Durham in September last year.

Kaneria was, however, released last month without being charged, while Westfield was facing a criminal case.

Kaneria showed his disappointment over the decision.

"I was ready to leave for Dubai but was suddenly told that I was not given clearance and that they [PCB official] will call me on Sunday and let me know the reason," Kaneria told local media.

Pakistan cricket has been rocked by spot-fixing allegations which surfaced during their national team's tour to England. Three players - Salman Butt, Mohammad Asif and Mohammad Aamer -- were suspended by the International Cricket Council (ICC) last month.

The suspensions came after revelations in British tabloid the News of the World claiming several Pakistan players -- including the suspended trio -- agreed with a book-maker to bowl deliberate no-balls during the final Test against England at Lord's in August.

The ICC has ordered Pakistan to implement measures to curb alleged corruption and other problems, warning failure to clean up its act could result in sanctions.

'Series win best of my captaincy'

Cricket

CRICINFO, Brisbane

Kumar Sangakkara has rated the series win over Australia as the best of his captaincy, but said his team must avoid lapses like the one at the Gabba if it is to be the best in the world. Sri Lanka followed their Twenty20 victory last week with two wins to claim the ODI trophy, but stumbled to an eight-wicket defeat in Sunday's dead rubber.

After their batting was so strong over the rest of the tour, the tourists were knocked over for 115 in only 32 overs to end their chances of a clean sweep. Sangakkara, who took over from Mahela Jayawardene in 2009, led the side to their first series victory in Australia and said the result was "definitely" the best result of his captaincy.

Sri Lanka now return home to prepare for a three-Test series against West Indies starting on November 15. "Sometimes it's a good thing [not having much time between games], when you're in form and in rhythm," Sangakkara said. "Sometimes it's important to keep playing, and winning games."

Eng start with a win

Cricket

AFP, Perth

Captain Andrew Strauss hit some promising form with the bat as England posted a confidence-boosting victory over Western Australia on Sunday in the opening match of their Ashes tour.

As England chased 243 to win off 52 overs on the third and final day, after the home side collapsed to 223 all out, Strauss anchored the innings with an unbeaten 120 to guide his side home with 4.2 overs to spare.

The left-hander brought up his 36th first-class century with a crisp straight drive for four from the bowling of part-time spinner Michael Swart, having faced 131 balls and hit 13 boundaries.

The tourists recovered from 117-7 in their first innings to win the match at Perth's WACA ground by six wickets and Strauss admitted his side were rusty, but said there were plenty of positives from the match ahead of the Test series.

"None of us have played any cricket for a few weeks," he said.

"In the first innings I thought we got stuck in net mode a little bit and probably didn't react as well to the conditions as we could have done.

"We were better second time around and hopefully we should get better with every innings we play."

Strauss said the performances of spinner Graeme Swann (4-101) and paceman Steven Finn (2-50) on the final day were highly encouraging ahead of the Ashes.

The top order's batting performance on the second day was disappointing, but there were a number of plus points for England from the match.

Kevin Pietersen and Strauss performed well with the bat, but it was the bowling attack that most impressed ahead of the first Test in Brisbane, which starts on November 25.

Swann picked up five wickets, as did Stuart Broad, who also made a half-century with the bat in England's first innings.

James Anderson only claimed one wicket, but showed no signs of discomfort from his recent cracked rib, and Finn bowled much better in the second innings after struggling on the first day.

One concern was the form of vice-captain Alastair Cook, who failed twice at the top of the order.

He was bowled for single figures in both innings, completing a disappointing match for one of the keys to England's hopes of winning their first Test series in Australia since 1986-87.

The 25-year-old, who is Strauss's vice-captain, has averaged just 22.60 in his last six Tests since making centuries in successive matches against Bangladesh.

He also has a poor record against Australia, with 498 runs at 26.21 in 10 Tests, but Strauss dismissed any concerns over Cook's form.

Pietersen, out to put 12 months of indifferent form with the bat behind him, followed his first innings 58 with a quickfire 35 from 22 balls in which he struck the ball far better than in the earlier knock.

He struck three glorious straight drives to the boundary in succession off pace bowler Hogan and also lofted spinner Michael Beer over midwicket for six, before being given out lbw to Beer when attempting an audacious reverse sweep.

The home side had resumed on the third day at 109-1, but collapsed meekly.

Booters lose

FROM PAGE 17
goalless draw against Singapore in the same group. Oman thrashed Maldives 3-0 and Pakistan went down 6-0 against Thailand in Group F matches.

BANGLADESH: Majharul Islam Himel (Aminul Haque), Rezaul Karim, Ariful Islam, Nasirul Islam, Waly Faisal, Mintu Sheikh (Taufhidul Alam Sabuz), Mamunul Islam, Imtiaj Sultan Jitu, Abdul Baten Komol, Enamul Haque, Zahid Hasan Ameli (Shakil Ahmed)

Robin sent packing

Tennis

AFP, Valencia

Spaniard David Ferrer produced a fine display of attacking tennis to knock out favourite Robin Soderling and reach the final of the Valencia Open 6-3, 3-6, 6-3 Saturday.

Ranked eighth in the world, Ferrer has had a less than spectacular season but still reached the finals in Rome, Buenos Aires and Acapulco. He needed to make the final in Valencia to qualify for the ATP Masters Cup in London.

At home on clay, Ferrer produced some of his best hard court tennis to beat Potito Starace in the quarterfinals and was primed for the challenge of the powerful Swede Soderling.

The number two seed has been in the form of his life and with Andy Murray knocked out, Soderling was clearly the man to beat. Going into the semi-final, Soderling was to go to lose a set and nonchalantly dispatched Gael Monfils in the previous round.

Soderling had won three out of the four meetings with Ferrer this year but they had won one each from the last two occasions.

It was a match as billed between Soderling's strong serve and volley game and Ferrer's quality ground strokes, and it was the Spaniard who would come out on top.

Ferrer controlled the majority of the rallies while Soderling made too many errors.

Only 55 per cent of his first serves went in as he lost the first set 6-3.

Soderling responded immediately, going 2-0 ahead in the second, and went on to level the match.

In the final set errors from both players led to several breaks of serve before Ferrer deservedly came through to win 6-3.

An upset in the second semi-final saw lucky loser Marcel Granollers beat Frenchman Gilles Simon.

Granollers, ranked 52, came in for the injured Jo-Wilfried Tsonga and has taken full advantage. He beat Juan Monaco, Murray's conqueror, in the last round and has now made it through to the final after out-playing Simon.

The Frenchman has been in good form and beat Nikolay Davydenko to reach the semis but Granollers broke at 3-2 before going on to take the first set and then also came out on top in a scrappy second to win 6-4.

Three Pak

FROM PAGE 17
Haider were fined 500 dirhams (136 dollars) for breaking curfew timings during the ongoing one-day series against South Africa, played in the United Arab Emirates.

"We have reminded the players that there will be no tolerance on discipline and after these three players returned late to the team hotel by five minutes they have been fined and issued show-cause notices," team manager Intikhab Alam told reporters.



The four up and coming golfers (L to R) Nafi, Tasbin, Mahi and Siam will represent Bangladesh in the Sinha Junior World Golf Championship 2010 that will take place at Royal Hua-Hin Golf Course in Thailand on November 10-14.

Shakib is Black

FROM PAGE 17
Hannan was also a surprise face when the Abahani players walked in and so was Tapash, playing his first season for the Sky Blues.

Newcomers Prime Doleshwar also made their presence felt signing national pacemen Rubel Hossain and Nazmul Hossain. Imran Ahmed, Arman Hossain, Delwar Hossain, Uttam Sarkar, Arafat Salahuddin and Nadif Chowdhury are the other important players for the club that rose after becoming First Division Cricket League champions last season.

Syed Rasel, Sabbir Rahman Nasir Hossain, Sanjamul Islam, Murad Khan and Rasel Al Mamun put pen to paper for Gazi Tank as the players' transferred yesterday.

Ivanovic lifts Bali Open

Tennis

AFP, Nusa Dua

Ana Ivanovic defeated Alisa Kleybanova 6-2, 7-6 Sunday to complete her turnaround season with a trophy at the Bali Tournament of Champions.

After sinking to a lowly 65th ranking during a two-year-lull following 2008 Grand Slam success at Roland Garros, the Serb, who turned 23 this weekend, won her second title of her last three events to cement a major comeback effort.

Ivanovic earned a place at the eight-woman event reserved for winners of WTA International titles during 2010 by lifting a title at Linz, Austria in October.

The Serb knows she still needs to make improvements. "I need to get to the level where I'm comfortable against top players all the time," she said.

"I feel very confident about my game and my fitness. My game is getting close to where it used to be. I'm playing more aggressive. I'm much more mature and a more complete player now."

Ivanovic's victory over Russia's Kleybanova, who failed to complete an Asian hat-trick after winning Kuala Lumpur and Seoul this season, will lift 24th-placed Ivanovic back to inside the Top 20 for the first time in over a year.



Serbian Ana Ivanovic, in traditional Balinese outfit, holds the trophy after winning the Bali Open yesterday.

Ivanovic won the last 11 points of the match and has ended her season with victories in 13 of her last 15 matches. She is expected to be placed 17th when she begins 2011, after claiming her third win from five meetings this year with the Russian.

Ivanovic won on a third match point after one and three-quarter hours, lifting the tenth title of her career with a record of 33-20.

"It's amazing. I'm really happy," said the winner. "It was such a good match. We both played some great tennis from the first point on."

"In the second set it came down to a little bit of mental strength. I managed to stay quite calm in these moments and I was very happy to close out the match."

In the third-place final, Japanese veteran Kimiko Date Krumm capped her best season since returning from retirement in 2008, seeing off Daniela Hantuchova 7-5, 7-5 in just under two hours.

The victory should see her move to around 46th in the world rankings.

Date Krumm, who in August became the oldest player in more than quarter of a century to rank in the top 50, needed four set points to secure the 66-minute opener against her Slovak opponent, who has won three career titles from 10 finals.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

43 Com-muters' choice
44 Dazzle
46 Praise
50 Lotion
53 Yule symbol
55 Greek vowel
56 Satan's purchase
57 Witness
58 Ballerina's frill
59 Click through the channels
60 Shade source
61 D.C. figure, for short

DOWN

25 Advantage
26 Ca-boose's position
27 Blunders
28 Addition sign
29 Parks of civil rights fame
30 Help in mischief
31 Taste the wine
35 World Series org.
38 Butter square
40 Diving bird
42 Beat
45 Christmas song
47 Decorate
48 Bart Simpson's school bus driver
49 Author Bellow
50 Donkey
51 "Skip to My --"
52 " -- Town"
54 Jewel

Solution time: 24 mins.

ACROSS
1 Lived
7 Rum cake
11 Performances
13 Melody
14 PC
15 Biblical
16 Earl Grey, e.g.
17 Peruse
18 Luke-warm
20 One
22 Clunky boat
24 Stick together
28 They usually end
32 Milk dispenser?
33 Timber wolf
34 Intention
36 Culture medium
37 Exhaust
39 Team members
41 Subordinate bureaucrat

DOWN
1 Power measure
2 Rue the run
3 Put an end to
4 Chow down
5 Stead
6 Swiss money
7 The altogether
8 Expert
9 Constrictor type
10 Moreover
12 "Go right ahead"
19 Payable
21 Debtor's letters
23 Lingerie item
25 Advantage
26 Ca-boose's position
27 Blunders
28 Addition sign
29 Parks of civil rights fame
30 Help in mischief
31 Taste the wine
35 World Series org.
38 Butter square
40 Diving bird
42 Beat
45 Christmas song
47 Decorate
48 Bart Simpson's school bus driver
49 Author Bellow
50 Donkey
51 "Skip to My --"
52 " -- Town"
54 Jewel

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11			12		13			14	
15					16			17	
18				19		20		21	
			22		23		24		25
26	27	28	29	30		31		32	
33					34		35		36
37				38		39		40	
41					42		43		
			44		45		46		47
48	49	50	51	52		53		54	
55					56		57		58
59						60			61

CRYPTOQUIP

OUBB - STNOT NBG MFGUN
HQLU CUQRWAFTH Q HWJ
KAUKQAFTH LQTJ PWFRIQPUP
CNA RAQMUB: KQIS - LQT.

Saturday's Cryptoquip: FAMED NOVEL THAT DETAILS A MASSIVE TWENTY-FOUR-HOUR CLEARANCE SALE: "THE DAY OF THE LOW-COST."
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: B equals L