

NZ plot India upset

Cricket

AFP, Hyderabad

New Zealand are banking on a virgin track in Hyderabad to provide their first Test victory in India for 22 years, batsman Ross Taylor said on Wednesday.

The Black Caps have only ever won two Tests in India, the last being a 136-run triumph in Mumbai in 1988.

An impressive performance in the drawn opener in Ahmedabad has boosted New Zealand's confidence going into the second Test, which starts at the Rajiv Gandhi Stadium in Hyderabad on Friday.

The newly-built stadium is hosting its first-ever Test.

"We are excited by the way we batted and bowled in Ahmedabad," Taylor told reporters. "The wicket in Ahmedabad was not very helpful but we are expecting different pitch conditions here."

"It will probably have a little more bounce and take more turn. It does not seem to be as flat as it was in Ahmedabad and we are taking a lot of confidence from that."

Taylor, 26, said fast bowler Chris Martin will benefit from the conditions after he struggled to add to his sensational five-wicket haul on the last day of the Ahmedabad match.

"Martin picked those five wickets on a track which had nothing to offer to the bowlers. But the wicket here is fresh and should help him out. Hopefully, Martin will show the form he did in Ahmedabad."

"We've all had a close look at India's batsmen and bowlers, so we are going to attack them more this time and try and put them under a little bit of pressure."

New Zealand started the three-Test series against top-ranked India with few expecting an upset but they almost matched India's first-innings total of 487 and had them on the mat in their second innings at five down for only 15 runs.

However a placid track, injuries to two of their bowlers and some plucky batting by India's Harbhajan Singh (115) and Venkatsai Laxman (91) put paid to their hopes of pulling off a shocking win.

The Kiwis are placed at number eight in the official Test rankings.

"We are all excited by our show but we are not getting carried away," said Taylor who chipped in with two wickets in his unusual role as a bowler in India's second innings, besides scoring a handy 56.

"We were a little bit down after losing the one-day series in Bangladesh 4-0. We got slammed, justifiably so. We were not quite abused but we really copped a lot of criticism."

"A lot of our players used that as motivation. And the rest were fresh from a successful tour of Zimbabwe. I think the game of cricket goes in roundabouts."

"We have firmly put the Bangladesh outing behind us. We are now using the India trip to get back on track," said Taylor, who has scored 1,997 runs from 26 Tests at an average of 43.41.

The third and final Test will be played in Nagpur from November 20-24 followed by five one-day internationals from November 28.



India master batsman Sachin Tendulkar (R) tosses the ball while teammate Ishant Sharma looks on during a training session at the Rajiv Gandhi International Cricket Stadium in Hyderabad yesterday. The second Test against New Zealand starts here tomorrow.

Nayeem shines for Dazzlers

SPORTS REPORTER

Iftexhar Nayeem made a vital contribution to Baridhara Dazzlers' five-wicket win over Kathalagan in the First Division Cricket League at the BKSP ground in Savar yesterday.

Nayeem, the younger brother of national opener Shahriar Nafees, scored 94 off 115 balls as Baridhara successfully chased 209 runs in 47.3 overs after losing two early wickets.

Apart from the right-hander, Mosharraf made an unbeaten 38 apart from picking up two wickets in Kathalagan's 208-8 from 50 overs.

At the City Club ground, Brothers Union (238 all out) crushed Rupali Bank (166 all out) by 72 runs with Rony picking up five wickets for the Gopibagh outfit.

In the day's other game, City Club (261 all out) beat Eskaton (245 all out) by 16 runs. Left-arm spinner Mohammad Ishaque took four wickets for City Club.

Ricky, inspired by Sachin

Cricket

PTI, Melbourne

Sachin Tendulkar's age-defying stupendous form of late has inspired Australia captain Ricky Ponting who says he wants to continue playing international cricket and score heavily despite turning 36 next month.

Ponting, often compared with Tendulkar for the tag of the best batsman in contemporary cricket, said he planned to play into his late 30s and make amends for his recent poor form "in the coming years".

"If I play well through the Ashes and well through the World Cup, then I'll continue to play. I want to play and if there's younger guys out there that I feel I'm keeping out of the team, then I'll step

aside," Ponting said.

"Even at my age we can find ways to improve and I think Sachin Tendulkar's been a great example of that. I think he [Tendulkar] made nine international hundreds in the last year at 37 years of age, so hopefully I can do something similar in the coming years," Ponting was quoted as saying by the Australian Associated Press.

Ponting justified missing the third ODI against Sri Lanka on November 7 by saying that reclaiming the Ashes was his top priority.

"All we're trying to do is give ourselves the best chance of winning the Ashes. If Cricket Australia and I and the rest of the team decided it was in my best interest not to play the game, then that's all we can do," he said.

Instead of playing the third ODI, Ponting chose to prepare for Tasmania's Sheffield

Shield clash against Queensland and said the plans had been in place for quite some time now.

"It was a tough decision to make, the guys had lost seven games in a row. I would've played the third game if it'd been one-all, but as it wasn't, we were two-nil down, so I took the opportunity to come to Tassie and prepare for the Shield game starting tomorrow."

"It probably could've been communicated better than that'd been planned for three or four months."

Ponting also threw his weight behind Michael Clarke, saying media attempts to label the Test vice-captain an unpopular leader within the team were "unwarranted".

"I'll support him as much as possible and he'll support me as much as possible," he said.

DRU-PEPSI MEDIA CRICKET The Daily Star breeze into semis

SPORTS REPORTER

The Daily Star romped into the semifinals of the DRU-Pepsi Media cricket tournament, outplaying Daily Kaler Kantha by 49 runs at the Maulana Bhasani National Hockey Stadium yesterday.

Batting first, The Daily Star put on a massive total of 97 runs without losing any wicket in their allotted six overs. Abul Kalam Azad (31) and Nazmul Alam Nobin (30) gave The Daily Star an excellent launchpad before retiring.

Wasim Bin Habib plundered four boundaries in the last over to post the daunting target. In reply, Kaler Kantha could only muster 48 runs in their allotted six overs losing one wicket in the process. Abul Kalam Azad was adjudged the man-of-the-match.

The Daily Star will meet Channel 1 in today's semifinal who beat Daily Sun by five wickets. Channel 1 easily overhauled Daily Sun's total of 37 without losing any wicket.

In the other quarterfinal, Destiny (47-1) defeated Bangla Vision (46-3) by four wickets while Jugantor (103-1) outclassed Diganta TV (67-4) by 36 runs.

Bangladesh

FROM PAGE 17 senior side could only hold Hong Kong to a 2-2 draw in one of the four matches they have played so far since 1975.

In the last two meetings, Bangladesh lost to Hong Kong 1-0 and 2-0 during the 2006 World Cup pre-qualifying matches.

According to a message from assistant coach Saiful Bari Titu, Bangladesh may field fresh legs against Hong Kong as midfielder Imtiaz Sultan Jitu will miss the game due to his illness while goalkeeper Aminul Haque will play the group final game, despite illness.

Pakistan to start anew

Cricket

AFP, Dubai

Pakistan will hope to put a series of on and off the field problems behind them and build under new captain Misbahul Haq when they play the first Test against South Africa starting here on Friday.

Pakistan's last Test against England at Lord's in August has been a subject of separate inquiries from Scotland Yard and the International Cricket Council (ICC) after a British newspaper report claimed several of its players accepted money from match-fixers.

Test captain Salman Butt and bowlers Mohammad Asif and Mohammad Aamer -- accused of contriving deliberate no-balls during that match -- were provisionally suspended by the ICC.

Misbah replaced Salman as captain for the two-Test series, shifted to the United Arab Emirates after South Africa refused to tour Pakistan over security fears.

Both Dubai and Abu Dhabi Stadiums will host a Test for the first time after becoming Pakistan's neutral venues since 2008 in the face of the security situation.

Pakistan, led by Shahid Afridi, lost the preceding Twenty20 series 2-0 and five-match one-day series 3-2 -- a result Misbah hopes will not affect the Test performance.

As if spot-fixing allegations were not enough, Pakistan cricket again hit the headlines for the wrong reasons this week when wicket-keeper Zulqarnain Haider fled the team hotel to London on Monday, saying he had received threats from

unknown people.

With regular wicketkeeper Kamran Akmal already not selected for the tour for fitness reasons, Pakistan had to call uncapped Adnan Akmal, the younger brother of Kamran and also retained opener Mohammad Hafeez for Tests.

With Asif and Aamer missing in action, Pakistan's bowling attack will rely heavily on pacemen Umar Gul and Mohammad Sami -- recalled after being ignored for the England tour.

In the absence of leg-spinner Danish Kaneria, Saeed Ajmal, Hafeez and Abdul Rehman will lead the spin bowling.

Pakistan's batting will revolve around Younis Khan -- who has not played a Test since July last year -- and Yousuf, both having enormous experience.

South Africa will have no such problems. They have quality batsmen in Graeme Smith, Jacques Kallis, Hashim Amla and AB de Villiers and enough bowling resources -- with spinners Paul Harris and Johan Botha -- to handle an unpredictable Pakistan batting.

Wicketkeeper Mark Boucher returns to the squad after missing the limited over series.

SQUADS

PAKISTAN: Misbahul Haq (captain), Imran Farhat, Taufiq Umer, Mohammad Hafeez, Asad Shafiq, Younis Khan, Mohammad Yousuf, Umar Akmal, Azhar Ali, Saeed Ajmal, Abdul Rehman, Adnan Akmal, Umar Gul, Tanveer Ahmed, Mohammad Sami, Wahab Riaz.

SOUTH AFRICA: Graeme Smith (captain), Hashim Amla, Johan Botha, Mark Boucher, AB de Villiers, JP Duminy, Paul Harris, Jacques Kallis, Morne Morkel, Wayne Parnell, Alviro Petersen, Ashwell Prince, Dale Steyn, Lonwabo Tsotsobe.

ICC introduces anti-corruption declaration

CRICINFO

The International Cricket Council (ICC) has asked all of its Full Members to sign a declaration showing support for the organisation's new anti-corruption methods in a continuing bid to keep the game clean.

The one-page letter is to be signed by both players and officials, and the process has already started.

"There was a declaration where we asked everybody that is involved in the game -- players and officials -- to declare their clear intent in joining us to ensure that the sport is clean," Haroon Lorgat, the ICC chief executive, told ESPNcricinfo yesterday. "It was done in the last week or so."

The move seems to have support from most major nations. Pakistan and Australia are believed to have been among the early signatories and South Africa are expected to be next. "The players are already subject to the anti-corruption code," Tony Irish, chief executive of the South African Cricketers' Association (SACA), said. "This is a very simple declaration that shows support for the anti-corruption methods used by the ICC."

An Australia Cricketers' Association official said the declaration -- circulated among the players last week -- was more of a PR exercise and that there was no sanctioning involved. "The Australian players were positive about it and happy to sign it."

Ratnakar Shetty, the Indian cricket board's chief administrative officer, said the board was yet to speak to its players about the document because of the ongoing series between India and New Zealand. "It is not that they are shown a piece of paper and they are made to sign it. The players have to be talked to about the declaration before they can sign the document."

DECLARATION'S CONTENT

"As a participant, official or administrator involved in the sport of cricket, I fully understand that public confidence in the authenticity and integrity of a cricket match is vital and if that confidence is undermined for any reason, then the essence of cricket as a sport could be damaged immeasurably."

"With that in mind, I hereby declare my unconditional commitment to maintaining the integrity of the sport and supporting the International Cricket Council and its Member Boards in their determined efforts to prevent any form of corrupt practices from infiltrating the sport. I am also personally committed to playing a meaningful role in maintaining the public's faith in the game and its integrity."

Rajshahi saunter

FROM PAGE 17

played a curious innings, giving chances aplenty. One of his top-edges fell between Barisal wicketkeeper Shahin Hossain and Shahriar Nafees inside the circle. Shakib's 33-ball 35 was brought to an end when Asif Ahmed's straighter one had him castled.

Earlier, Arafat Salahuddin and Shohag Gazi revived Barisal's faltering innings with an 81-run eighth wicket stand. The in-form Arafat made another important contribution for his adopted division, making 64 off 83 balls with five fours and a six. Shakib took three for 34 while off-spinner Nazimuddin Ripon picked up two for 23 from 10 overs.

DHAKA-RAJSHAHI

Rajshahi bounced back from Monday's four-wicket defeat to Khulna with a convincing 79-run turnaround against Dhaka.

Junaed Siddiqui's 60 was a welcome return to form for the left-hander who had thus far had a dry spell in the domestic competition. The left-hander hit eight boundaries in a 76-ball 60, also adding 96 for the second wicket with Sabbir Rahman.

The Rajshahi all-rounder top-scored with 74 off 89 balls with five fours and a six. Some lusty late-order hitting from Forhad Reza (35 off 14 balls) made sure that the Khaled Mashud-led side went past the 250-run mark for the third game in a row.

A trip down memory lane

FROM PAGE 17

The 9th Asian Games returned to its roots in New Delhi for the biggest Asiad in history, with more than 4,500 competitors from 33 countries and regions.

While fencing and bowling were dropped, equestrian, rowing, handball and golf were added, and Japan was finally toppled by China in the gold medal count.

Seoul used the 1986 Games as preparation for hosting the 1988 Olympics and for the first time the Games came under the control of the Olympic Council of Asia as media interest began to grow.

Martial arts played a more prominent part, with the introduction of judo and taekwondo. China topped the medals tally for the second time in a row.

In acknowledgement of China's rise, Beijing played host in 1990 with 37 countries and regions in 27 events. Taekwondo was excluded, along with equestrian events but canoeing, kabaddi, wushu and sepaktakraw were introduced.

China made it three Games out of three as it again took first place in the medals table.

Hiroshima's hosting of the Games four years later signalled the first time they were not held in a capital city.

Bangladesh U-17s take 2-0 lead

SPORTS REPORTER

An unbeaten half-century from Arafat Sunny saw Bangladesh U17s to an easy seven-wicket victory over Cricket Association of Bengal (CAB) U17s at the Sylhet Divisional Stadium yesterday.

The win made it 2-0 in favour of the Bangladesh U17s team. Sunny made 67 off 90 balls with the help of seven boundaries, sharing an unbroken 83-run fourth wicket stand with Mosaddek Hossain as the home side reached the target of 144 runs in 30.1 overs.

Mosaddek, also unbeaten, contributed with 46 off 38 balls. Earlier, Taskin Ahmed and Zubair Hossain took two wickets each to knock off the visitors for 143 runs in the 49th over.

Rifles clinch h'ball title

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh Rifles retained their crown when they won the Exim Bank 20th National Men's Handball title beating Bangladesh Police 40-33 in the final at the Handball Stadium in Paltan yesterday.

This was the 19th crown for Rifles and 15th in a row in the 20 editions of the tournament.

Chittagong finished third beating Rajshahi 21-13.

POINTS TABLE

TEAM	P	W	L	D	Pts
Barisal	7	5	2	0	10
Rajshahi	7	4	3	0	8
Dhaka	7	4	3	0	8
Khulna	7	4	3	0	8

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS	36 Erstwhile acorn	DOWN	16 "— Town"
1 Whack at	37 Nervous	1 Weeps loudly	20 Hearty brew
9-Across	38 Sphere of interest	2 Abbott's second baseman	22 Fear, and then some
5 Oil cartel acronym	40 Symbol for tin	3 Verdi opera	23 Toil
12 Colum-bus' home	41 Expiate	4 Monotonous drumbeat	24 Mischievous tyke
13 Pocket bread	43 Choice piece	5 Comic strip	25 Bill's partner
14 Literary collection	47 Bargain bin abbr.	6 Pendulum site	26 Oaths
15 Speaks ill of	48 Halitosis	7 Ordinal suffix	27 Life-guard's place
17 Banned pesticide	51 Scarlet Arm	8 Societal level	29 Kvetch
18 Ranking	52 Bone	9 Bitterness	30 Pigpen
19 Verboten	53 Competent	10 Loosen	35 Trinity member
21 Either mate	54 "Undoubtedly"	11 Feline, to Francisco	37 Ingratiate
22 Reside	55 Mast		39 Picture puzzle
24 Warhead	56 Hinge (on)		40 Round Table address
27 Expert			41 Ethereal
28 Long periods			42 Genealogy chart
31 Extinct bird			43 Ski lift type
32 "— the fields we go, ..."			44 Infant
			45 "— have to do"
			46 He and she
			49 Jungfrau, e.g.
			50 "CS" evidence

Solution time: 25 mins.

A	G	E	D	E	O	N	A	B	A	B	
L	U	N	E	S	R	I	U	R	G	E	
P	R	I	C	E	T	A	G	S	O	R	
S	U	D	O	K	U	H	O	T	W	A	R
		Y	E	A	T	U	R	N			
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A	R	G	O								
		N	O	R							

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24	25	26			27			28		29	30	
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41	42						43			44	45	46
47					48	49	50					
51					52					53		
54					55					56		

CRYPTOQUIP

Q N Q R Y H P O R T U B H Y H F N R G H
Q P N E J T T N P A U K U S A H E J O H Y J
B H F Z P U K J P J Y N B R G U N S
Y J T T N S T: "O I E H P J Y H Z I."
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WHEN SOMEONE SIMPLY CAN'T DECIDE WHICH COAL PIT HE PREFERS, COULD YOU SAY HE'S OF TWO MINES?
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: I equals Y