

DRS without ball-tracking

AFP, London

There will be no reviews of lbw decisions during the forthcoming England-India Test and one-day series, the International Cricket Council (ICC) announced Wednesday.

Indian concerns over the reliability of ball-tracking technology meant the ICC was unable to get universal adoption of the full decision review system (DRS) for all international matches at a recent meeting.

Now, for the four-Test and five-match one-day series between England and India, there will be no HawkEye predictive tracking system for lbws.

However, 'Hot Spot' imaging technology and stump microphone audio will be able to assist the on-field umpires with caught decisions.

India captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni, speaking ahead of the first Test which starts at Lord's here on Thursday, told reporters on Wednesday: "We are not 100 percent convinced on the tracking system and the (measurement of) bounce."

"We are quite happy with the 'Hot Spot'."

England captain Andrew Strauss said he'd rather DRS be used in full.

"I think the system has worked very well over the last 12-18 months."

"We have all got used to it and have got more decisions right which is a good thing."

"As it happens we can't use the full DRS in this series and we are just going to have to deal with the half-way house we have got."

"I don't think it's ideal but that's the situation we are faced with. For us as players to be overly concerned about it would be unhelpful."

Waugh backs lie-detection

AFP, London

Former Australia captain Steve Waugh has taken a lie-detector test as part of his bid to help root corruption out of cricket.

Waugh believes making players submit to examination by lie-detectors, or polygraphs as they are also known, could help drive cheats from the game.

As a member of the world cricket committee of Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC), which owns Lord's, Waugh volunteered to undergo a test to confirm he had never been involved in corruption in cricket.

MCC arranged for him to be tested by Steven van Aperen who, it said in a statement, was one of "Australia's leading polygraph examiners".

"Steve Waugh passed this test convincingly," MCC added.

Waugh, speaking to reporters at Lord's here on Tuesday, said: "As a former captain I know you never ask a player to do something you are not willing to do yourself."

"So on April 7 I went to Melbourne and went through the process of a polygraph test."

"At the end of the process, which took about two hours, I was convinced that anybody with something to hide would be found out by this process."

Australia great Waugh was spurred into action following last year's revelations by Britain's now defunct News of the World tabloid that former Pakistan captain Salman Butt, and bowlers Mohammad Aamer and Mohammad Asif, were all involved in the deliberate bowling of no-balls during a Test against England at Lord's as part of a betting scam.

BCB worried

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questions about the decency of the comments.

"I think the way he (Shakib Al Hasan) made his comments was not right. In my opinion the question is here not whether he breached the code of conduct or went beyond his jurisdiction rather I am concerned about whether he maintained decency when he expressed his disappointment," said Siraj when asked about the controversy.

"There are some norms and everybody should maintain it. You can even express your anger in a decent way. What I want to say that he was not wise in his comments. So we will look into the matter," he added.



India captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni (L) and his England counterpart Andrew Strauss share a light moment as both have their hands on the Pataudi Trophy after a photo session at Lord's yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

MILESTONES converge in 2,000th Test

Cricket

AFP, London

Test cricket will celebrate its 2,000th match with a series opener between England and India at Lord's that promises to delight both statisticians and Sachin Tendulkar should the 'Little Master' mark an already landmark occasion with a 100th international hundred.

The match is also the 100th Test between England, who gave birth to cricket, and India, now top of the ICC's Test rankings, the 50-over world champions and the sport's financial powerhouse.

That means it will feature a clash between the 'old world' and the 'new' -- as there was, albeit in a different fashion, when England travelled to Melbourne to play Australia in the very first Test in 1877.

Tendulkar arrives at the 'home of cricket', as Lord's likes to call itself, having had to contend with a level of admiration arguably unequalled in both its frenzy and duration in cricket history.

However, the ever-modest Tendulkar, his team-mates and opponents have all said the same thing: there is more to this match than Sachin.

"I'm not thinking of records," he insisted. "I'm just thinking of enjoying this tour," added Tendulkar, whose four previous Tests at Lord's have yielded a meagre top score of 37.

And he is far from the only star in a powerful top-order featuring the likes of Rahul Dravid, who made 95 at Lord's on his Test debut in 1996, and Venkatsai Laxman.

"It would be very, very risky to focus all our energies on one player," said England off-spinner Graeme Swann.

"Sure, he's the best player of the modern generation, but if we focus on one guy another will sneak in the back door and take it away from us."

"In MS Dhoni (India's captain) they have

possibly the most charismatic player India has ever had, with the sway he holds in that country now.

"I think he is the most important player in that team now. He leads from the front, is a very dangerous cricketer and if we can get at anyone then he is probably the key man."

India could rue the shoulder injury that has ruled out Virender Sehwag from at least the first two Tests of this four-match contest -- a series that if England win by 2-0, 3-1 or better will see them replace the tourists at the top of the ICC's Test table.

England too boast an in-form top order with Alastair Cook and Jonathan Trott both in the runs.

ENGLAND AND INDIA SINCE 1990

Season	Hosts	No. of Tests	Result
1990	England	3	1-0 England
1992/93	India	3	3-0 India
1996	England	3	1-0 England
2001/02	India	3	1-0 India
2002	England	4	Drawn 1-1
2005/06	India	3	Drawn 1-1
2007	England	3	1-0 India
2008/09	India	2	1-0 India

OVERALL HEAD-TO-HEAD (MATCHES)

Played	England won	India won	Drawn
99	34	19	46

INDIA IN ENGLAND (SERIES)

SQUADS

ENGLAND (from): Andrew Strauss (capt), Alastair Cook, Jonathan Trott, Kevin Pietersen, Ian Bell, Eoin Morgan, Matt Prior (wkt), Stuart Broad, Graeme Swann, Chris Tremlett, James Anderson, Tim Bresnan

INDIA (from): Abhinav Mukund, Gautam Gambhir, Rahul Dravid, Sachin Tendulkar, Suresh Raina, Venkatsai Laxman, Mahendra Singh Dhoni (capt/wkt), Harbhajan Singh, Praveen Kumar, Ishant Sharma, Zaheer Khan, Shathakumaran Sreesanth, Amr Mishra, Yuvraj Singh, Munaf Patel, Wriddhiman Sahaw.

SELANGOR MASTERS GOLF

Siddikur swings 4-under

SPORT DESK

Bangladesh's golfing sensation Siddikur Rahman carded a decent 4-under-par 68 in the first round of the Worldwide Holdings Selangor Masters on Wednesday, when all the limelight was stolen by Finnish rookie Joonas Granberg who set a new course record of 10-under-par 62 at the at Kota Permai Golf and Country Club.

Granberg took a three-shot lead over second placed South African Tjaart Van Der Walt while Siddikur was on joint seventh position with seven more alongside him at the end of the opening day in the 400,000-dollar event.

Siddikur, fresh off his triumph in Sembilan Masters Invitational last week, said he was satisfied with his day's work despite being bothered by a neck injury.

"I'm very happy with it as I'm not feeling well with my neck problem. Shot one bogey on the card through some bad shots but managed some good up and down for pars. I couldn't hit it too well today (Wednesday) but the putter was excellent. I'm satisfied with my round."

"I had a good start. Birdied the 12th hole which was a given. I then chipped in on the 13th. On two, I hit it to four feet, on four I rolled in a 20-footer and on five, I hit it to three feet," Siddikur told the Asian Tour website after the day's play.

Praising the rookie leader Granberg, Siddikur said he was keeping a close eye on the Finn.

"10-under is a great score. I saw him turn in seven under. It's good but let's see what happens in the next three rounds."

The Finn himself knows his quest for a maiden Asian Tour title is far from over. "This is my first time leading. I'm going to take it easy. It's only the first round. I have to play very good in the next three rounds," said Granberg.

Leading scores after Round One: 62 Joonas Granberg (FIN), 65 Tjaart Van Der Walt (RSA), 66 Berry Henson (USA), 67 Joti Randhawa (IND), Pariya Junhasavasdikul (THA), Mo Joong-Kyung (KOR), 68 Kalle Samooja (FIN), Siddikur (BAN), Panuwat Muenlek (THA), Ashok Kumar (IND), Artemio Murakami (PHI), Lam Chih Bing (SIN), Lin Wen-tang (TPE), Adam Groom (AUS).

Booters off to Lebanon

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and have confidence in them.

"I believe my players have the quality to beat Lebanon, who have lost 0-1 to Oman, 0-6 to Kuwait and 2-6 to UAE. Even though Lebanon have made 11 changes in the team, that means that they were trying to find the right team, I feel we have got every chance against them" said Ilievski.

Captain and goalkeeper of the side Biplob Bhattacharjee was also upbeat about putting on a good show against Lebanon: "We know we stand on the brink of a great opportunity, Bangladesh football will get a big boost if we can move to the next round and the players are ready to give their best, they are motivated to do that," said Biplob.

Meanwhile, striking duo Zahid Hasan Emily and Mithun Chowdhury, who played on hire in a local match in Manikganj on Tuesday, have

been kept in the squad in the greater interest of the national team, but the football governing body would look into the matter after the matches against Lebanon.

"Both of them admitted that they played on hire and begged pardon and they have been allowed to travel with the national team, but we will definitely take actions against them after the matches against Lebanon," said BFF vice president Badal Roy.

SQUAD: Biplob Bhattacharjee (GK/C), Ziaur Rahman, Mamun Khan, Mamun Mia, Ashraf Mahmud Linkon, Mohammad Sujun, Ariful Islam, Rezaul Karim Reza, Nasirul Islam, Wali Faisal, Atiqur Rahman Meshu, Pranotosh Kumar, Monaem Khan Raju, Mamunul Islam, Zahid Hossain, Shakil Ahmed, Abdul Baten Komol, Mohammad Robin, Mithun Chowdhury and Zahid Hasan Emily.

Skipper ducks Law's debut

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weren't here today for other reasons, probably personal reasons. It's always nice to get the squad all together, but tomorrow morning we will all be together," he added.

Law spent his first day on the job trying to get acquainted with the players and their techniques. "It was very basic today, but we got to know what the players are about, saw a bit of their technique, but most importantly a bit of interaction with them which is very important," he said.

The Tigers will play a two-day practice match from today against the GP-BCB National Cricket

Academy in Mirpur and Law believes a player is best understood under game situations.

"It's always nice to see them under match conditions. You can practice as much as you like, but if you get them under a pressure situation in a match, whether it is a practice match or a full-scale Test match, you understand the players a lot more."

"Hopefully the weather holds for us tomorrow; if we can get a decent two day's cricket it will stand us in pretty good stead. We will understand the players a lot more before we go to Zimbabwe," he said.

Rival captains salute Sachin

Cricket

AFP, London

India captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni and England counterpart Andrew Strauss were united in their praise of Sachin Tendulkar with the batting great on the verge of another landmark record.

The India star needs just one more century to become the first batsman to score a 100 international hundreds -- he already has 51 in Tests and 48 in one-day internationals, both records.

Tendulkar could create yet more cricket history when England and India meet in the first of a four-Test series at Lord's starting here on Thursday, in what will be the 2,000th Test ever played and the 100th between the two countries.

His stellar international career started when he was just a 16-year-old back in 1989.

Dhoni, asked what had motivated Tendulkar, who has scored over 14,000 Test runs at an average of more than 56, to keep playing at such a high level for so long told reporters at Lord's on Wednesday: "I think he loves the game, he has a passion for the game."

"Every time he turns up on the field he wants to improve his game. He may spend one-and-a-half hours on the field, but in that time he makes sure he is learning something, and when he goes back to the dressing room he can proudly say today's time I utilised to the best."

"He tries to keep it very simple and doesn't complicate things."

"Overall, I think he's an ideal cricketer to look up to, the way he has conducted himself on and off the field, irrespective of the fact that when he made his debut in one year's time he was a superstar."

"He has remained the same for the

last 21 years."

Curiously, Tendulkar, Australia's Ricky Ponting and now retired West Indies star Brian Lara -- widely regarded as the three best batsmen of the last 15 years -- have all failed to score a Test century at Lord's.

Strauss, who has achieved the feat several times, was at a loss to explain why and jokingly said he was annoyed not to be included in the same company. "I don't know, you'd have to ask them. I have scored a hundred and I'm not on your list which is very disappointing to me obviously!" the left-handed opener told reporters.

"I'm sure Sachin would love to score a hundred here and it's our job to make sure that doesn't happen."

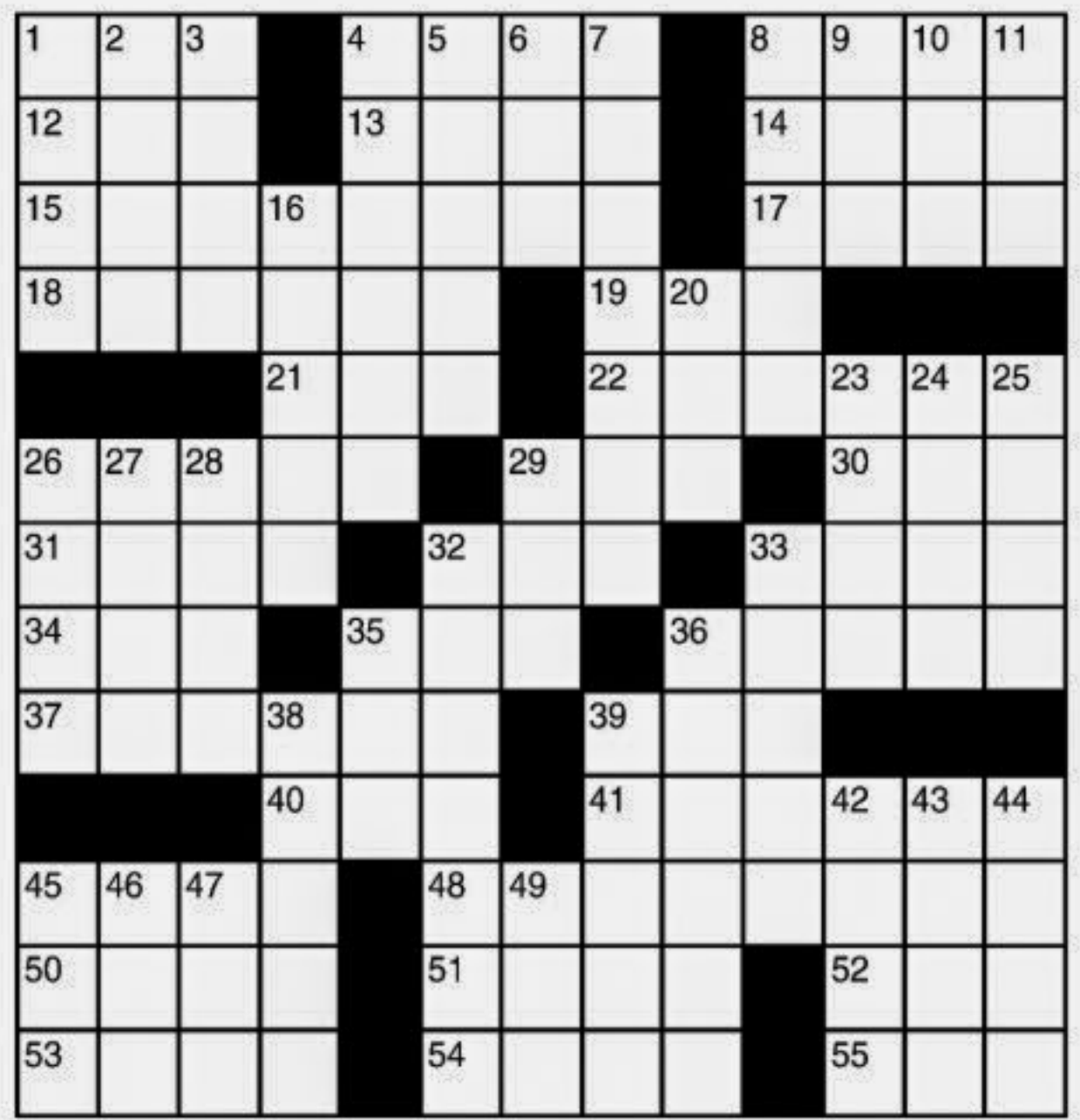
Tendulkar has managed a mere 149 runs in seven Test innings at Lord's at an average of just 21.28 and with a top score of 37.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

1 Intimidate	37 One of the Marshall Islands	DOWN	20 Scull prop
4 Support	39 Slimpy's cartoon partner	1 Dogpatch creator	23 "American"
8 Harbor structure	40 Morsel	2 Exam format	24 1492 ship
12 Altar constellation	41 Stay away from	3 Carry on	25 Race place
13 Ladd or Alda	45 Needle case	4 Maine city mentioned in "King of the Road"	26 Grouch
14 Desire	48 Summer squash	5 Extraterrestrial	27 Bigfoot's cousin
15 Violin virtuoso	50 Bronx cheer	6 Paint container	28 Neb
Niccolo	51 Birthright barterer	7 Plied needles	29 Young seal
17 Cash-drawer contents	52 Banned bug spray	8 "the Raven, ..."	32 One of Santa's team
18 Solemn promise	53 Diva's solo	9 Coffee vessel	33 Dugout furniture
19 Youngster	54 Scuff	10 Time of your life?	35 Black-bird
21 Dress in	55 Curvaceous character?	11 "Of course"	36 Save
22 Sesame paste		16 Put in	38 Resort island near Majorca
26 Internet-related			39 Summarize
29 Apiece			42 Stash
30 Cacophony			43 Tackles' team-mates
31 Clarinet insert			44 Mental acuity
32 Chum			45 Mesozoic, e.g.
33 Daniel Craig role			46 Pitch
34 -----			47 9mm sub-machine gun
35 Matterhorn, for one			49 Cable channel
36 Pass along			

Solution time: 25 mins.

ACROSS: 1 ARCH, 4 LOOK, 8 FREE, 12 ADRI, 13 RIF, 14 GIFT, 15 MEET, 17 EASE, 18 SVA, 19 SOIL, 21 AWL, 26 CHE, 32 DOP, 33 BOPS, 34 AURA, 35 FIDA, 36 ROBERT, 37 FIVE, 38 TOWN, 39 EWE, 40 EVENT, 41 OUS, 42 FIDEL, 43 GIFT, 44 ARC, 45 TOISS, 46 FERR, 47 NED, 48 APT, 49 MEET, 50 TEND, 51 DDAY, 52 EASE, 53 TEN, 54 BE, 55 MA, 56 FIA, 57 SUN, 58 HAT, 59 FRE, 60 ESTY, 61 LIA, 62 FRES, 63 TYLE, 64 SOIL, 65 FIRE, 66 APEX, 67 AWL, 68 ROAD, 69 LEST



CRYPTOQUIP

R L R A K D V T L W Q T Z H V Q R
 D C L A H D C A E M K Q E M U L L K
 U V L W D Z L A H S F D Z H D Z Q D E
 Q Z K D E Y: "HSF CLVEFL KLZ FV."

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WHEN SOMEONE IS AWARE THAT A MACHINE HAS TOOTHED GEARS, I'D CHARACTERIZE HIM AS COG-NIZANT.
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: R equals P