

Clarke shines in draw

Aussies clinch series 1-0

Cricket

AFP, Colombo

Australia clinched the Test series against Sri Lanka 1-0 Tuesday after resurgent skipper Michael Clarke led from the front to snatch a draw for the tourists in the finely poised third and final game.

For Clarke it was a victorious first Test tour as captain, the series win coming after the 125-run defeat of the hosts in the opening encounter in Galle. The second Test in Pallekele ended in a rain-affected draw.

Clarke said he was delighted at his team's performance after receiving the series trophy named after spin legends Shane Warne and Muttiah Muralidaran.

"I am very proud with the way we played on this tour," he said. "It was good to see the new players make the most of the opportunities that came their way."

He added that his team, which swaps places with Sri Lanka to move up to fourth in the official Test rankings, was anticipating a "completely different challenge" next month in South Africa.

The skipper burst into form with a fluent century and Michael Hussey narrowly missed a third consecutive hundred as Australia piled up 488 in their second innings before they were all out shortly before close with a lead of 331.

Sri Lanka were 7-0 from two overs in their second knock when the match was called off at the Sinhalese Sports Club in the capital Colombo.

Clarke, who replaced Ricky Ponting as captain, hit 112 and Hussey made 93 in a remarkable batting revival after the tourists had conceded a first innings lead of 157 runs in good batting conditions.

Clarke, who went 23 innings without a Test century since making 168 against New Zealand in March last year, hammered 14 boundaries and three sixes in his robust knock.

He was dismissed after he lost concentration following a verbal on-field skirmish with Sri Lanka's Kumar Sangakkara and holed out in the deep to become left-arm spinner Rangana Herath's fifth victim.



PHOTO: AFP

Australia captain Michael Clarke looks up to the heavens upon reaching his century during the 5th day of the 3rd and final Test against Sri Lanka at the Sinhalese Sports Club Ground in Colombo yesterday.

Herath finished with remarkable figures of 7-157 on an unhelpful pitch, his last wicket giving him 100 Test scalps in 29 matches.

Hussey continued his amazing run in the series, scoring 463 runs in five innings at an average of 92.60, but missed out on a century in each innings of this match.

The left-hander moved to 93 with two fours off Tillakaratne Dilshan, but fell in the same over as he swept high to a diving Chanaka Welegedara at deep square-leg.

The West Australian had scored 95 and 15 in the first Test, 142 in the second and 118 in the first innings here.

Hussey, who picked up the man-of-the-match awards in all three Tests, was also adjudged the man-of-the-series.

He and Clarke put on 176 for the fifth wicket after Sri Lanka had struck an important blow in the day's sixth over.

Australia added just 11 runs to their overnight score of 209-3 when century-maker Phil Hughes top-edged a sweep off Herath to Lahiru Thirimanne at square-leg.

The left-hander made 126, his third Test century.

Dilshan, the Sri Lanka captain, said he was impressed with the way his team bounced back after losing the first Test and then being saved by rain in the second.

"We came back strongly and that is a good sign for us," he said. "I think we had a very good chance to win this game but I must admit Australia played better cricket to save it and take the series."

Sri Lanka will now prepare for Test and one-day contests against Pakistan to be played in the United Arab Emirates from next month.

SCORES IN BRIEF

AUSTRALIA: First innings 316
SRI LANKA: First innings 473

AUSTRALIA: Second innings 488 (Watson 21, Hughes 126, Marsh 18, Ponting 28, Clarke 112, Hussey 93, Haddin 30, Siddle 26; Herath 7-157)

SRI LANKA: Second innings 7 for no loss (Paranavitana 2 not out, Thirimanne 4 not out)

Result: Match drawn and Australia won three-match series 1-0.

Man-of-the-match: Mike Hussey.
Man-of-the-series: Mike Hussey.

School h'ball from today

SPORTS REPORTER

Fruitfill School Handball Tournament (U-12) starts today at the Handball Stadium. A total of 16 teams from the Dhaka Metropolis will take part in the event.

The 16 teams will be competing in four groups, said organisers at a press conference at the Bangladesh Handball Federation (BHF) yesterday.

The opening match will take place between BIS and BAF Shaheen School and College at 4pm. The tournament is being organised by BHF and sponsored by Pran RFL Group.

AFC U-16 QUALIFIERS Booters end with defeat

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh completed their miserable AFC U-16 Qualifiers campaign with fourth consecutive defeat when they went down 4-0 against Qatar at Duhok Stadium in Iraq yesterday.

Qatar dominated the game from the onset and took a 2-0 lead before the breather and added two more goals in the second half to seal their second victory in four matches.

The Bangladesh team had earlier lost to hosts Iraq 7-0, Palestine 2-0 and Iran 3-0.

Tommy's 'dream'

FROM PAGE 16

According to Tommy Miah, Farokh will help bring other former international players to the concept while locally, he has already contacted Test cricketer Taposh Baisya.

"It will have all the facilities and more of the Tommy Miah's Hospitality Management Institute. I have been dreaming of doing something in cricket for the last 20 years and finally I have come near it," he said.

Sachin makes ODI concerns official

Cricket

PTI, London

The ODIs are perceived to be on the decline and it's none other than Sachin Tendulkar who has now come out publicly in support of revamping the current 50-over format having written a letter to ICC chief executive Haroon Lorgat.

Tendulkar, the world's highest run-getter in both Tests and ODIs and someone who is on the threshold of his 100th international century, wants ICC to make "a radical switch" from 50-50 to four 25-over innings.

Apart from reducing the number of overs per innings, Tendulkar has also proposed several more changes for the ODIs.

The Indian batting icon had spoken about this new concept in television interviews in the past but had never written a letter to ICC in this regard.

"I have been capturing my thoughts on what I think would be the way forward to ensure that all three formats in the game co-exist and ensure value creation," he wrote in the letter seen by 'The Times'.

He argued that four alternate innings of 25 overs for each side in an international would be the fairest way of balancing the advantages gained by the team that won the toss when pitch and weather conditions mean that a match can virtually be decided by the spin of a coin.

Tendulkar's letter also proposed changes in voluntary Powerplays.

In each 25-over block, Tendulkar wants

only two Powerplays at the behest of the batting side but suggested that up to four bowlers should be allowed up to 12 overs each, rather than the present limit of 10.

One of the prominent matches featuring India seemed to have been lost after spin of coin was 1996 Wills World Cup semi-final when Lankans batted first on a square turner.

Tendulkar also cited two games in the most recent World Cup when evening dew helped England to achieve a tie in their classic qualifying game against India in Bangalore but then counted in favour of Ireland during their famous run chase against England at the same venue.

A split into two equal innings a side was often proposed for the final of the domestic county competition in the UK - originally the Gillette Cup - in the days when it was invariably an advantage to field first, the report said.

The hover cover, instant outfield drainage and sophisticated drying equipment have ensured that matches at Lord's almost always start on a dry pitch these days, but that is not the case everywhere.

In Australia last winter, the inter-state one-day tournament, the Ryobi Cup, was played over 45-overs-a-side, split into two alternate innings of 20 overs followed by two of 25.

The format was generally rated a success by Cricket Australia (CA). There were more close finishes, more runs, more wickets and larger TV audiences.

Significantly, the new regulations appeared to overcome the relatively dull and predictable middle-over phases of 50-over games.

Early test

FROM PAGE 16

Sahagir Hossain would hope to pip Johurul Islam behind the stumps.

But the game will be under the threat of rain as it has been throughout the tournament and a rain-reduced match is almost likely.

TEAMS
BANGLADESH: Mushfiqur Rahim (captain and wicketkeeper), Tamim Iqbal, Imrul Kayes, Shahriar Nafees, Alok Kapali, Mohammad Ashraf, Shuvo Goto, Hom Chowdhury, Nasir Hossain, Shafiqul Islam, Rubel Hossain, Abdur Razzak.

However, he will now stay home for treatment in an attempt to be fit for New Zealand's upcoming tour of Zimbabwe.

"Tim has suffered some cartilage damage to his left knee while preparing for the Champions League," New Zealand director of cricket John Buchanan said.

"He requires further assessment to determine the seriousness of the injury but initial signs indicate that he is unlikely to require surgery.

Southee out of CLT20

AFP, Christchurch

New Zealand fast bowler Tim Southee pulled out of the Champions League Twenty20 cricket series on Tuesday after suffering a knee injury.

Southee, who recently won the ICC Twenty20 International Performance of the Year award, was to have flown to India this week to join the Chennai Super Kings ahead of their first match on September 24.

However, he will now stay home for treatment in an attempt to be fit for New Zealand's upcoming tour of Zimbabwe.

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Let's see him

FROM PAGE 16

wicketkeeper on tour to England and later as the first-choice for the 2007 World Cup, wanted to see Mushfiqur in action as the captain before making a comment.

"Unless I see him, I cannot tell whether he is captaincy material. His biggest disadvantage is that when he performs badly, he gets mentally down. He has to come out of it," said Faruque, who added that it would be vitally important for the Bangladesh Cricket Board to give him a fair go.

"The decision was already taken when they sacked Shakib. It was an expected decision. They should stop the musical chair and appoint someone for a long time," added the former national captain.

Faruque however also wished him well, saying, "I wish him best, he is the best choice among those available."

JFA CUP U-15 FOOTBALL Tangail, BKSP in semis

SPORTS REPORTER

Tangail and Bangladesh Krira Shikkha Protisthan (BKSP) all but confirmed their semifinal berths of the JFA Cup U-15 Football Tournament after registering second successive victories at the Bangabandhu National Stadium on Tuesday.

Tangail, who defeated Kushtia 5-1 on the opening day, thrashed Khulna 6-0, thanks to a brilliant hatrick from Ilias, who struck four goals after Limon opened the account. Linkon struck the other for the winners.

In the day's other match, BKSP came from behind to beat Kushtia 3-1. Mozahid levelled the margin for BKSP after Shaon had put Kushtia in front. Masud and Akash struck one goal each to ensure the second win for BKSP, who had earlier defeated Khulna 3-0 in their tournament opener.

PREMIER DIV KABADDI Navy, Jail, Fire Service win

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Navy, Fire Service and Bangladesh Jail won their respective matches of the Runner 13th Premier Division Kabaddi League at the Kabaddi Stadium yesterday. Navy defeated Dhaka Wanderers Club by 38-15 points with two credible Iona. Fire Service outplayed Maniknagar Kabaddi Club by 24-11 points with 1 lone while Jail annihilated Jatrabari Faruk Smrity Sangsad by 88-13 points.

Zahid team

FROM PAGE 16

the board had decided not to extend the tenure of Tanjeeb Ahsan Saad as team operations manager.

"We have already released a circulation for a new team operations manager for the long term but in the meantime Masum will act as a team operations manager for the next two series. Masum will continue with the job if the board is satisfied with his service," informed BCB's media committee chairman Jalal Yunus after the meeting.

It was expected that the directors will give their opinions on the proposed constitution amendment, but Jalal said that it will be discussed in the next board meeting.

"We have time to discuss the issue and that's why the directors have deferred it," said Yunus.

Little Mushfiq

FROM PAGE 16

"In cricket, the captain has a big role. Definitely I will try to share everything but I love to enjoy full freedom as a captain," said Mushfiqur.

Former Australia captain Ricky Ponting is his role model, but Mushfiqur knows he does not have the same weapons as his idol. "And here lies the challenge for me," finished the little man, who wants to emerge as big as one can be as a skipper.



Bangladesh women cricketers practise their catching at the Academy Ground yesterday, in preparation for the World Cup qualifiers to be held in Dhaka from November 14.

Nielsen quits as Aus coach

Cricket

AFP, Colombo

Australia national coach Tim Nielsen has decided to step down rather than reapply for his job, he said Tuesday, soon after the team posted a 1-0 Test series win over Sri Lanka in Colombo.

Nielsen, 43, who held the job for four years, would have had to reapply for the expanded role of head coach, a post which is being created following recommendations made by the seven-month Argus Review of Australian cricket.

He had been due to stay on in the current role for next month's tour of South Africa before a new head coach was appointed, but Australia will now have to look for an interim coach.

Nielsen told reporters in Colombo he was not interested in applying for the revised job position.

"The review process has come up with some recommendations that are meant for Australian cricket to get better," he said.

"One of those is that a new head coaching role that is different to what I'm doing at the moment and had some different responsibilities added to it.

"For me to continue, I need to go through an interview process with other candidates. I just don't feel it's right for myself or the team to put us through that."

"I think it's time for me to finish." Cricket Australia said Nielsen is due to take up a "new Australian cricket role that will be announced soon".

CA chief executive James Sutherland said Nielsen could not be persuaded to apply for the new post, but thanked him for his hard work since taking over from John Buchanan in 2007.

"Tim has been national coach during a period in which we have had a long list of great champions leave the game and has been a strong support for new players coming into the side over that period," Sutherland said in a statement.

"I was delighted when he agreed to renew his contract last year and had encouraged him to apply for the new, expanded and redesigned head coach role that the CA Board approved last month.

"However, I have spoken to Tim and understand and respect his decision to now begin a new chapter in his professional life."

During Nielsen's tenure, Australia lost two Ashes series against England and failed to retain the limited-overs World Cup in April after winning it on the last three occasions.

Australian cricket is undergoing a transitional period following the retirement of greats like Shane Watson, Mathew Hayden, Glenn McGrath and Adam Gilchrist.

The sweeping Argus Review was ordered by the Australian cricket board after the Test team's humiliating 3-1 Ashes series defeat to England this year.

The announcement came after Michael Clarke replaced Ricky Ponting as captain and led Australia to Test and one-day series wins in Sri Lanka on his first full tour at the helm.

No review of India's English disaster

Cricket

REUTERS, Mumbai

The new Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) president N Srinivasan on Monday ruled out any formal inquiry into the team's abysmal performance on their tour of England.

India arrived in England as the number one Test team in the world but meekly surrendered their top ranking after a 4-0 whitewash.

The 50-overs world champions did no better in the shorter versions and failed to win a single international match during the tour.

The board and the national selectors were heavily criticised by pundits and fans for the performance of the team but Srinivasan ruled out any review along the lines of what Australia did after their 3-1 Ashes loss to England in the beginning of the year.

"I don't like to lose," Srinivasan told reporters after the board's annual general meeting at its headquarters in Mumbai.

"And the BCCI can't wait to get back to the top spot. But we have not formed any committee to look into it.

"Yes, we did not do as well as expected. (But) it happens. We have belief in this team and we believe that this team will bounce back very well."

India were plagued by injuries during the tour and critics have blamed a punishing schedule for the team's plight. This year Indian players were involved in series against South Africa, West Indies, the World Cup and the Indian Premier League before being humiliated during the two-month tour of England.

The jam-packed itinerary took its toll on the players as Sachin Tendulkar, Yuvraj Singh -- named man-of-the-tournament at the World Cup -- Virender Sehwag, paceman Zaheer Khan and spinner Harbhajan Singh were just some of the players who were forced to fly back home early.

While the BCCI president blamed injuries as one of the main reasons for the debacle, he refused to accept that the Indian team was playing too much cricket.

"We did not have our best team together from the beginning," he said. "We have taken stock of the number of days of cricket played by the other countries. There is not much difference."

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

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|---|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| ACROSS | 41 Norse thunder god | DOWN | 17 Biblical verb suffix |
| 1 Study hard | 42 Slowly, in (Abbr.) | 1 Chowder ingredient | 19 Snare |
| 5 And so on (Abbr.) | 45 Low in hemoglobin | 2 Hindu princess | 22 Jaunty chapeau |
| 8 Halt | 49 Last page, maybe | 3 Shake-speare's river | 24 Light touch |
| 12 Volcanic outflow | 51 Ocean motion | 4 Hand-book | 25 Id counterpart |
| 13 Ultra-modern (Pref.) | 52 Requests | 5 Ingratated | 26 Russian horsemen |
| 14 Sulk | 53 Anti-walked (on) | 6 Golf ball prop | 27 Stones guitarist Keith |
| 15 In due time | 54 Waked (on) | 7 Comical Imogene | 29 Payable |
| 16 Liar, e.g. | 55 Atomizer output | 8 Hits, old-style | 30 Make a mistake |
| 18 60 seconds | 56 Type squares | 9 Russian comrade | 33 King of the jungle |
| 20 Assault | 57 Harvard rival | 10 Oil cartel acronym | 36 Most massive |
| 21 Bedouin | | 11 Fringe benefit, for short | 38 Attractive |
| 23 That woman | | | 40 Energy |
| 24 Bridge player who calls trump | | | 42 Leading man? |
| 28 Faction | | | 43 Lucy's hubby |
| 31 Past | | | 44 Reed instrument |
| 32 Jeopardy | | | 46 Actress Sorvino |
| 34 Mangy mutt | | | 47 "American —" |
| 35 Non-sense | | | 48 Reelin-quish |
| 37 Translate a cryptogram | | | 50 Shade tree |
| 39 Ford Explorer or Isuzu Rodeo | | | |

Solution time: 24 mins.

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CRYPTOQUIP

X D N C Z W T O S Z U J T O I T X
X B R E L A T E D C I N P V T O N R
K T S N B Z J K Z K P S A D K U K B L :
" S A B O K S B Z V A Z W N B E . "

Saturday's Cryptoquip: WHAT COULD YOU CALL THE DEMOGRAPHIC FOR PEOPLE WHO DON'T SHOWER OFTEN ENOUGH? DIRTYSOMETHINGS.
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: L equals W