

India win kabaddi WC

Bangladesh out in QF

SPORTS REPORTER

India clinched the first women's Kabaddi World Cup championship title, defeating Iran 25-19 in the final at the Patlipura Sports Complex in Patna on Sunday.

Earlier in the day, India outclassed Japan 60-21 while Iran defeated Thailand 46-26 in the two semifinals to set up a summit clash.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh's run ended in the quarterfinal stage as they lost to Japan by 15-17 points on Saturday night. Bangladesh made a poor start in the first half and despite their best efforts in the second, they had to concede the defeat by two points. Bangladesh had made it to the quarterfinals with three straight wins over Malaysia, Italy and Sri Lanka in the group phase.

Kamal finds

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this delegation will submit a report to the government which has the final authority to decide on the tour."

On March 3, 2009 gunmen ambushed the Sri Lankan team bus in Lahore, killing eight Pakistanis and wounding seven visiting players and their assistant coach.

The attack suspended international cricket in the country, stripped Pakistan of its 2011 World Cup hosting rights and forced it to play home series at neutral venues in England, New Zealand and the United Arab Emirates.

Pakistan have invited Bangladesh to play three one-day internationals or two one-day matches and a Twenty20 contest.

"We will also write a letter to the ICC over the assessment of the security and will seek their permission as they are the governing body of the game," said Kamal.

The ICC last month said it will conduct an independent security assessment before deciding whether to send their match officials for the series.

"We keep our fingers crossed and hope that international cricket will be revived with the Bangladesh team's tour to Pakistan as our government has promised foolproof security for the Bangladesh team," said Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chairman Zaka Ashraf.

Punjab province chief minister Shahbaz Sharif also welcomed the possible revival of cricket in Pakistan.

"We will give the best possible security to the Bangladesh team and for the sake of millions of fans we want to revive international cricket in Pakistan," Sharif said.

Chelsea sack

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season's Champions League after a 3-1 defeat at Napoli in the last 16th leg.

The 34-year-old also had strained relationships with several of Chelsea's senior stars, including England midfielder Frank Lampard, and a woeful run of results -- including just one win in their last seven matches and only three from their last 12 in the League -- forced owner Roman Abramovich to act.

The final straw came on Saturday as the Blues suffered a lachkustre 1-0 defeat at West Bromwich Albion thanks to a late winner from Garth McAuley.

"Andre Villa-Boas has parted company with Chelsea Football Club today," the Chelsea statement read.

"The board would like to record our gratitude for his work and express our disappointment that the relationship has ended so early.

"Unfortunately the results and performances of the team have not been good enough and were showing no signs of improving at a key time in the season.

"The club is still competing in the latter stages of the Champions League and the FA Cup, as well as challenging for a top-four spot in the Premier League, and we aim to remain as competitive as possible on all fronts.

"With that in mind we felt our only option was to make a change at this time.

"With immediate effect Roberto Di Matteo has been appointed first team coach on an interim basis until the end of the season."

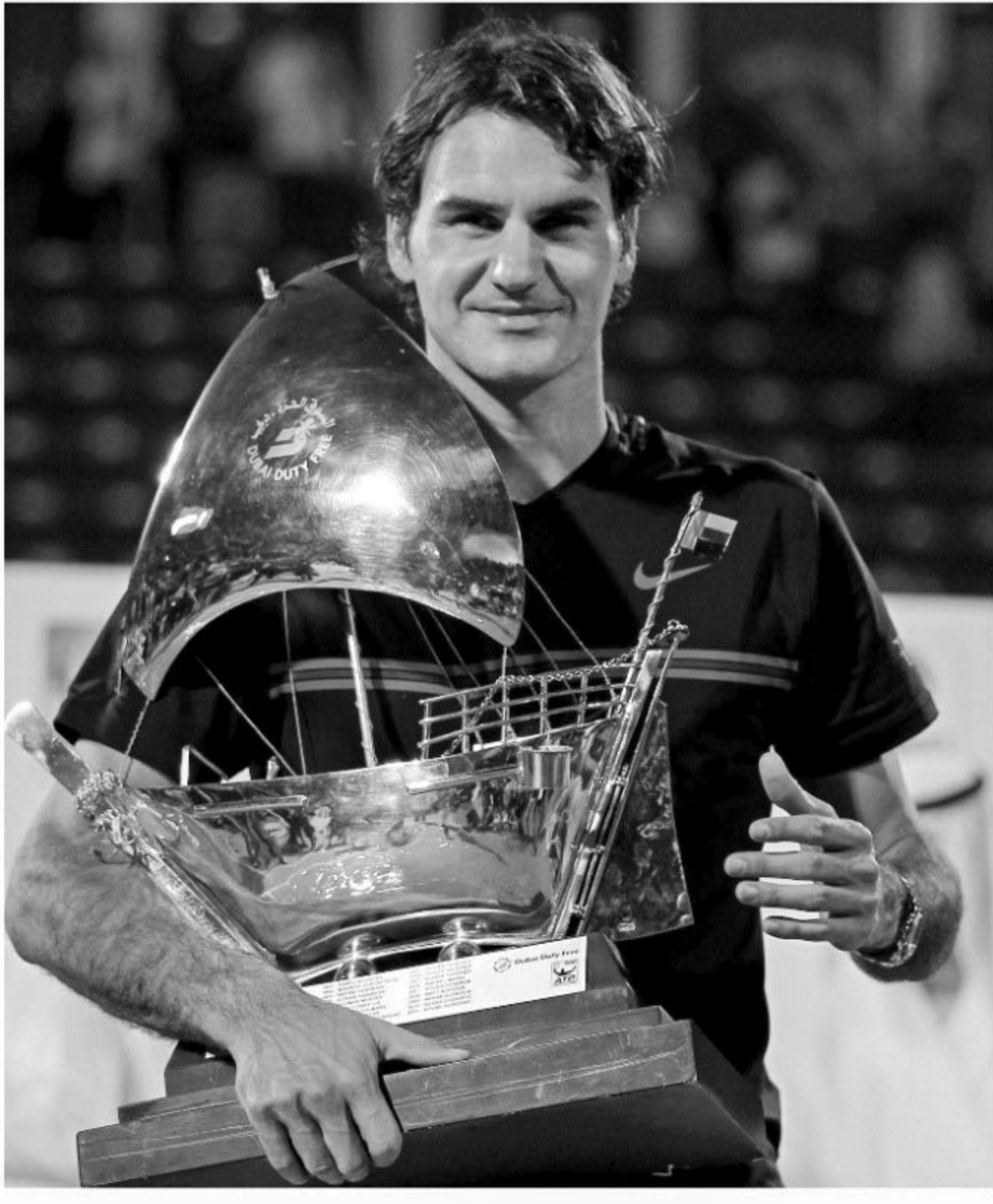


PHOTO: AFP
Former World No.1 Roger Federer of Switzerland holds the Dubai Open trophy after beating Britain's Andy Murray 7-5, 6-4 in the final in Dubai on Saturday.

Fed's fifth Dubai title



AFP, Dubai

Roger Federer underlined his status as an enduring front line contender with the 72nd title of his career which extended his record of Dubai Open trophies to five with victory over Andy Murray on Saturday.

The 16-time former Grand Slam champion from Switzerland overcame the triple Grand Slam finalist from Britain 7-5, 6-4 in a tightly-contested final in which Federer escaped an early mini-crisis and then resisted a Murray mini-comeback.

During that period, Federer's sequence of 66 unbroken service games came to an end, but he was slightly the more assertive player and his success brought him his 33rd win in 35 matches and his second title in succession.

"It's beautiful winning this," Federer said.

"It's such a difficult tournament with so many top ten players, and Andy having such a huge victory getting to the final," he added, referring to Murray's semifinal victory over world number one Novak Djokovic.

"It was a quick court and there was a bit of breeze and I though we both played pretty well. I got a bit lucky and played really well on the big points, and I had a wonderful tournament.

"I've had a great start to the season, and a great finish to last season, so I hope I can keep it up. But there are a lot of guys who are going to play tremendous as well."

Murray missed a decent chance to make a decisive thrust when he had Federer at 15-40 in the sixth game.

The first of these break points offered Murray a decent chance of converting, but unaccountably he replied to Federer's three-quarter length slightly sliced ball by overhitting a flat backhand drive.

Murray was also at the focus of the game's most unusual incident, appealing for a Hawkeye replay twice on the same point,

when his first serves were called faults -- and both times proving the line judge wrong.

He followed it with a slightly caustic aside to umpire Mohamed Lahyani, in which he appeared to refer to the Hawkeye controversy two days previously when Tomas Berdych's failed return of serve stood after an incorrect service line judge call.

And Murray followed that with an ace as if to justify himself. But by allowing Federer to escape from his early crisis, he had stored up trouble.

The four-times former champion continued with his unblemished serving record -- standing at 58 unbroken games before this match -- and then broke Murray for 6-5.

It happened with the help of a mis-hit return of serve, which set up a comfortable passing opportunity for Federer, but by then much of the damage had been done because Federer had been allowed to rebuild his momentum.

This continued in a slightly higher, smoother gear in the second set, in which Federer this time broke much earlier, in the third game, getting him to 2-1 and then 3-1 when he consolidated it.

Again a Hawkeye decision played an important role. Murray thought he had got to 30-40 with an ace, but the replay showed it as a fault and Federer capitalised with a rally in which he lured the Scot into angling a backhand drive wide.

Murray then brought Federer's great serving run came to an end -- after 66 unbroken games.

It happened when Federer made one slightly arrogant and another rather optimistic approach to the net, and found Murray lobbying him both times.

On one the great man was forced to turn and run, only for Murray to punish him with a deftly angled drop volley; on the other Federer tried a hopeful high backhand overhead volley and saw it fall into the net.

MS the only choice?



PTI, Brisbane

No captain could hope to survive as debilitating successive losses as Mahendra Singh Dhoni has done in England and Australia in a span of nine months and yet, if anything, emerge stronger.

Dhoni lost eight successive overseas Tests in which four losses have been by an innings, one by over 300 runs, and the remaining two by 196 and 122 runs.

His own form with the bat has hardly been the redeeming feature. In England, it was 220 runs from eight innings at 31.43 and in Australia, it was 102 runs at 20.42 from three Tests and six innings.

Technically, the ignominy of "white-wash" in Australia was shared between him and Virender Sehwag who filled up for him in Adelaide due to a ban on account of slow over-rates. It's difficult to foresee though if the result would have been any different had Dhoni been around.

Yet Indian cricket's strongman continues to flourish -- mainly due to his past achievements which include two World Cup titles and numerous firsts, including a one-day series won in Australia, and to a lesser extent because no real successor is at hands to replace him at the helm.

When Mohammed Azharuddin lost his captaincy in the summer of 1996,

due to series loss in England, Sachin Tendulkar was at hand to be bestowed the honour and not an eyebrow was raised.

Sourav Ganguly's magnificent achievements abroad mattered little when coach Greg Chappell crossed his path in 2005 and prevailed.

Kapil Dev lost his captaincy most abruptly after India lost in the semifinals of the 1987 World Cup in India. His predecessor Sunny Gavaskar lost his own after a debilitating 3-0 series loss in Pakistan in early 80s.

Internationally too, few captains have survived such humiliating losses. Ricky Ponting stepped down from captaincy after Australia lost the 2011 World Cup having won the two previous editions under his leadership.

Ponting himself got the one-day leadership in early 2000 at the expense of Steve Waugh who was the man-mountain of Australian cricket at his peak.

Viv Richards wasn't beaten once in any series as captain and won 27 of his 50 Tests. Yet, he was nudged into retirement and Richie Richardson was asked to replace him.

In Pakistan, captains are replaced at a mind-boggling regularity. Any series loss spells the end of captaincy for the man at helm. In the 90s, it regularly floated between Wasim Akram and Waqar Younis.

And so has been the case in England. Michael Vaughan won England the Ashes in 2005, led for five years during

which he captained in 52 Tests and won half of them.

Yet he first lost his one-day captaincy to Paul Collingwood and was later replaced with Kevin Pietersen in Tests. He tearfully resigned from captaincy in 2008.

South Africa prefers captains for longer durations. So Hansie Cronje led the nation in 53 Tests and Graeme Smith has already been at helm for 83 Tests. However, they too never suffered reverses like Dhoni did in the last one year.

Former Australia captain Steve Waugh is inclined to believe Ganguly was a better captain than Dhoni. He believed Ganguly instilled a sense of self-confidence in the team and had a never-say-die attitude.

Under him, the team never gave up and had the hardness of steel. Dhoni, on the other hand, is cool while he needed to be aggressive in Australian conditions like Ganguly was.

The midas touch of Dhoni, it appears, would continue as long as he wants since India doesn't tour overseas for the next two years and captaincy aspirants, Virender Sehwag and Gautam Gambhir, have fallen by the wayside.

Dhoni believes "captaincy is not something you could cling to; you don't have a right to it and it's a responsibility to be managed with the best of your ability."

He also has stated his willingness "to step aside if there is someone who could do a better job than him."

Whatmore new Pak coach

REUTERS, Karachi

Australian Dav Whatmore has been appointed Pakistan's head coach for two years, the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) announced on Sunday.

Englishman Julian Fountain would be the fielding coach, the PCB said. The two men would take immediate charge of the team and prepare them for the Asia Cup tournament.

"We have reached an agreement with Whatmore who will be the new coach of the Pakistan team for the next two years," PCB chairman Zaka Ashraf told reporters.

"We feel that a foreign coach can best exploit the talent available in Pakistan cricket."

Whatmore, who led Sri Lanka to victory at the 1996 World Cup, said he was looking forward to the challenge, adding: "We will do our best to produce the best results with our available talent and I am confident of good results."

Whatmore, 57, played seven Tests for Australia and enjoyed a successful coaching spell with Bangladesh, leading them to their first test match and subsequent series win in 2005.

Pakistan have had three foreign coaches in the past - Englishmen Richard Pybus and Bob Woolmer and Australian Geoff Lawson.



CRICINFO, Auckland

Chris Martin is ready to go head to head with Dale Steyn in what he has dubbed "the battle of the swing bowlers," in the upcoming Test series between New Zealand and South Africa. Martin warned batsmen on both sides that they will be caught in the crosshairs of a furious fight between the quicks operating in favourable conditions.

With an unusually wet, windy and cold summer it seems the weather gods have done half the job and Martin said New Zealand's attack should be able to do the other half. Two of the three Tests being played at what Martin calls "swinging conditions," in Dunedin and Wellington, places where he expects New Zealand's attack to thrive.

"The success of all our bowlers will probably improve in swinging conditions," he said.

Even though South Africa have the world's top-ranked Test bowler in their arsenal, Martin believes that New Zealand have the strength to match that and the other elements of the hosts' varied attack. "If you've got a left-arm [Trent Boult] and you've got a couple of guys who swing the ball away and myself who brings it back in, I think the balance is there to test techniques," he said.

"When you put Daniel [Vettori] into the mix as well it covers a lot of the bases South Africa also cover."

It could all add up to a toxic combination for batsmen, who will have to brush up on their cautiousness more than their cover drives, according to Martin. "It should be a challenging series for batsmen if we get the wickets right," he said. "If there's any moisture in the air, the pitch will always have something in it."

New Zealand have expressed interest in creating increasingly seamer-friendly pitches as they look to turn their four-pronged attack into a permanent feature. Almost everyone in the South African camp, from bowling coach Allan Donald to Steyn to limited-overs captain AB de Villiers, have welcomed the move, saying it would work in their favour as well.

South Africa are fresh off preparing green mambas of their own over the summer as they beat Sri Lanka. Although their batsmen also find the going tough on spicy surfaces, it's a battle they've fought many a time and have shown no fear of being asked to fight it again. Martin said New Zealand are aware of, and in some ways in awe of, that ability.

"They [South Africa] have probably been one of the better sides over the past five years. Their consistency is

something we have to aspire to as a Test-playing nation," Martin said. He is not wrong. South Africa are the best travellers in world cricket over that period and have shown few signs of fragility abroad.

Martin is one of very few who has seen their weaknesses first hand. His 44 South African scalps at an average of 24.59 are the most wickets he has taken against any country. They have also come at a significantly better rate than his overall average of 33.33. At home, his record against South Africa is even more impressive. In two Tests in 2004, Martin claimed 18 wickets at an average of 16.66 against them, including 11 in the Auckland Tests.

He hopes the recollections of those returns will act as motivation for the coming series. "It's about looking back on how I've played against them in the past. That will bring some good memories and some good, positive vibes," he said. "The series is more about revisiting those memories."

Relief

FOR PAGE 16

club tent after the match.

However, no untoward incident occurred as police and leaders of Mohammedan Supporters Group tackled the situation and guarded the players off to the dugout.

Australia take lead

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but I knew I had to keep going and be there at the end," Warner said.

"I knew through that middle period that if I stayed in there and got a big hundred we would get 300."

Clarke won the toss and had no hesitation batting first on an overcast Brisbane afternoon.

Warner and fellow opener Matthew Wade got the Australians off to a blistering start, smashing their first 50 runs from just 40 deliveries.

Wade brought up his 50 and the Australian 100 in just the 18th over as the home side continued to dominate.

Warner reached his 50 soon afterwards with the two powerful left-handers providing the platform for a massive score.

The Sri Lankans eventually broke through when Rangana Herath took a spectacular catch in the deep to dismiss Wade for 64 with the total on 136.

Wade smashed Kulasekara over long-on, only for Herath to leap backwards, thrust out his left hand and snare the ball, somehow managing to hold on to it as he crashed into the ground just inside the boundary rope.

However, Warner kept going and shared 50-run partnerships with Clarke and

Watson to keep the score ticking over.

Mike Hussey played a late cameo of 19 to ensure the visitors would be chasing well over 300 under lights, which proved just too big a target.

SCOREBOARD

AUSTRALIA

Warner b Prasad	163
Wade c Herath b Kulasekara	64
Watson c Thirimanne b Maharoo	21
Christian c Sangakkara b Prasad	10
D Hussey c and b Herath	1
Clarke c Jayawardene b Malinga	37
M Hussey not out	19
Extras: (lb-1, w-5)	6
Total: (For 6 wickets in 50 overs)	321
Did not bat: Lee, Pattinson, Doherty, Hilfenhaus	
Fall of wickets: 1-136, 2-186, 3-223, 4-224, 5-288, 6-321	

Bowler

	O	M	R	W
Malinga	8	0	74	1
Kulasekara	10	0	60	1
Maharoo	9	0	64	0
Dilshan	9	0	35	0
Prasad	7	0	51	2
Herath	7	0	36	1

SRI LANKA

Jayawardene c Wade b Lee	14
Dilshan b Lee	27
Sangakkara c Watson b Lee	42
Chandimal c Pattinson b D Hussey	14
Thirimanne c Wade b D Hussey	14
Tharanga c D Hussey b Watson	6
Maharoo c Christian b D Hussey	8
Kulasekara c Doherty b D Hussey	73
Prasad not out	31
Herath c Doherty b Watson	5

Malinga c M Hussey b Watson 1
Extras: (b-1 lb-3 w-11 nb-2) 17
Total: (All out in 49.2 overs) 306
Fall of wickets: 1-39, 2-52, 3-93, 4-115, 5-125, 6-144, 7-248, 8-285, 9-301

Bowler

	O	M	R	W
Lee	9	1	59	3
Hilfenhaus	4	0	46	0
Pattinson	5	0	49	0
Watson	9.2	0	33	3
Doherty	10	0	39	0
D Hussey	8	0	43	4
Christian	4	0	33	0

Result: Australia won by 15 runs and lead three-match finals 1-0.

Local Snippets

FROM PAGE 16

while Mamun Mia netted the other in the 85th minute for Prantic.

Jahangir and Arif scored one goal apiece for Friends in the 29th and 51st minutes respectively.

National school football

Koyagolath High School defeated Al Faruk Academy 3-0 to emerge champions of the National School Football Tournament yesterday. Koyagula earlier beat Bangalipur High School 2-0 in the first semifinal while Al Faruk beat Botlagari High School 4-2 in the other semifinal.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Largest continent

5 Humpty Dumpty

8 Carpet style

12 Like a superintendent's apartment, often

14 Couturier Chanel

15 Food closets

16 Top-notch

17 Years on end

18 Disposition

20 Tine

23 Belch

24 Contained

25 Lingers

28 Hammar-skjöld of the U.N.

29 Incites

30 Cistern

32 Weds

34 -- E.

35 Carry a load

36 Mediter-ranean island

37 Jellied incendi-ary

40 Listener

41 First person

42 Bakery offerings

47 Zilch

48 North Carolina cape

49 Census data

50 Take to court

51 Navy-related (Abbr.)

2 Aegean, e.g.

3 Hostel

4 Go to

5 Ireland

6 "Gosh!"

7 Move-ments

8 Shrimp dish

9 Hula--

10 Zits

11 No stay-at-home

13 Kermit is one

19 Blunders

20 Third deg.

21 Paper quantity

22 Gym-nast

23 Dadaist painter

23 Holder for cream cheese and lox

25 Victories

26 Wicked

27 Sodium chloride

29 Caspian feeder

31 Afternoon gathering

33 Actor Ving

34 President Harding

36 Damon or Dillon

37 "Peter Pan" pooch

38 Work like --

39 Sheet of glass

40 Renaissance family name

43 Junior Olympics org.

44 Savings-plan acronym

45 Water (Fr.)

46 Former fast flier

Solution time: 24 mins.

T	H	R	U	S	T	A	B	Z	I	P
H	O	O	P	L	I	N	E	I	D	O
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M	I	M	E	O		R	O	O	K	S
S	I	T	A	R	S		S	T	R	E
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C	H	A	R	I	C		R	U	S	K
I	O	N		A	G	U	E	A	N	O
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CRYPTOQUIP

S U Q I E Q N T M Z D G A B D T S

Z Q H R B M H D G F R M H G Z M M F R

F S Q K O Z D H Q F K Q B N M F R B :

“UMHHDAB DE AOS IMHQZZSMF.”

Saturday's Cryptoquip: IF SOME FEMALE SHEEP HIDE BEHIND CERTAIN POISONOUS SHRUBS, COULD YOU SAY THAT EWES USE YEWES?

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: M equals A