

Martin burst puts NZ atop

Cricket

AFP, Dunedin

New Zealand seized control of the first Test against South Africa Wednesday thanks to a stunning spell of three wickets in four balls from pacerman Chris Martin.

The Proteas ended the day at 191 for seven, with Jacques Rudolph (46) the only recognised batsman left after skipper Graeme Smith and Hashim Amla scored half-centuries but the rest of the line-up failed to fire.

South Africa trounced New Zealand in the limited overs series and the Test looked to be heading the same way before Martin triggered a collapse that saw six wickets fall in the final session of a rain-shortened day in Dunedin.

With almost four hours of play lost to the weather, New Zealand captain Ross Taylor looked to have made the wrong call sending South Africa into bat after winning the toss, as the Black Caps' attack struggled in the first session.

South Africa were 86 for one at tea, with Smith notching his 31st Test 50 and Amla looking settled on a flat, lifeless pitch that yielded only one wicket, Alviro Petersen (11), for New Zealand's bowlers.

But Taylor's gamble paid off spectacularly when the clouds cleared and Martin dismissed Smith for 53 in the first over after the break, the batsman driving the ball to debutant Rob Nicol at cover as he attempted a boundary.

Martin struck again in his next over, dismissing Jacques Kallis for a duck when the batsman nicked the ball to



New Zealand pacer Chris Martin celebrates after taking the prize wicket of South Africa batsman Jacques Kallis on the first day of the first Test at the University Oval in Dunedin yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Taylor at first slip.

AB de Villiers became scalp number three in the next ball, trapped lbw for a golden duck when the delivery nipped back sharply, skidding past the bat and crashing into the batsman's pads.

De Villiers called for a television review, which backed the umpire's decision and sent the despondent South African trudging back to the pavilion with the Proteas reeling at four for 90.

Martin could not manage a hat-trick when Rudolph came to the crease but his devastating spell lifted the Black Caps, who suddenly

looked sharper in the field and more threatening with the ball.

Amla kept his cool to steady South Africa, grafting out a valuable 66-run partnership with Rudolph to post his 22nd Test 50.

Doug Bracewell thought he had the batsman caught and bowled on 56 but a television review showed the chance fell just short of the diving bowler's fingers.

However, Amla was dismissed in the next over, missing a Daniel Vettori delivery and sending the ball looping to Taylor in the slips. Mark Boucher (4) faced

only two balls before being run out when Rudolph, on strike, took off for a single, only for Bracewell to fire the ball back from the field to South African-born keeper Kruger van Wyk, who broke the stumps.

Rudolph then survived a huge lbw appeal from New Zealand on 32 when replays showed Bracewell overstepped the line before releasing the ball.

The bowler made amends in his next over, coaxing an edge from Dale Steyn to the slip cordon which ricocheted off Martin Guptill's hand but stayed in the air long enough for Taylor to snatch the chance.

The Proteas will hope Rudolph can combine with the tail enders to post a competitive total to keep alive their dream of a clean sweep in the three match series, which would see them take top spot in the ICC world Test rankings.

SCOREBOARD

Table with columns: SOUTH AFRICA: First innings, Smith c Nicol b Martin, Petersen lbw b Boult, Amla c Taylor b Vettori, Kallis c Taylor b Martin, De Villiers lbw b Martin, Rudolph not out, Boucher run out, Steyn c Taylor b Bracewell, Philander not out, Extras: (lb-1, nb-1), Total: (For 7 wickets in 59 overs) 191, To bat: Tahir, Morkel, Fall of wickets: 1-34, 2-86, 3-90, 4-90, 5-156, 1-161, 7-179. Includes a small table for bowler stats.

T20 AGAINST SA Robin takes up Sachin's place

PTI, New Delhi

Robin Uthappa was on Wednesday named in place of Sachin Tendulkar in India's Twenty20 International in Johannesburg on March 30 to commemorate the 150 years of settlement of Indians in that country.

Tendulkar, who no longer plays in T20 Internationals, was expectedly left out of the 15-member Indian squad which has all the other players in the team for the Asia Cup starting in Bangladesh on Sunday.

Karnataka batsman Uthappa had done well in the Vizay Hazare Trophy with two centuries in his name.

Young Delhi batsman Virat Kohli, who was made vice-captain of the ODI team for the Asia Cup, will also be the deputy to Mahendra Singh Dhoni in the one-off T20 Internationals, a BCCI release issued by its Secretary Sanjay Jagdale said.

The one-off T20 International in South Africa at the Wanderers ground will be held after the March 11-22 Asia Cup and precede the Indian Premier League T20 competition commencing on April 4.

SQUAD

Mahendra Singh Dhoni (captain), Virat Kohli (vice-captain), Robin Uthappa, Gautam Gambhir, Rohit Sharma, Suresh Raina, Ravindra Jadeja, Ravichandran Ashwin, Praveen Kumar, Vinay Kumar, Rahul Sharma, Yusuf Pathan, Manoj Tiwary, Irfan Pathan, Ashok Dinda.

Nat'l school football

SPORTS REPORTER

Bolra Munnu Model High School emerged Harirampur upazila champions in the National School Football Islami Bank Tournament beating Ramkrishnapur MA Jalil High School 1-0 in Manikganj yesterday. Tarikul struck the decisive goal for the winners.

Earlier, the eventual champions beat Chandpur High School 5-3 in shootout to set their final clash against Ramkrishnapur School, who defeated Patgram Ananthband High School 3-2 in semifinal.

BFF fines

FROM PAGE 16 committee fined Feni Soccer Club Tk 20,000 as their official Nizamuddin hurled water bottle towards the referee during their home match against Farashganj. Nizamuddin was also slapped with a month's ban.

The committee also imposed ban on Bangladesh Championship League side Beanibazar SC's media officer Abul Bashar Sumon and goalkeeping coach Mizanur Rahman Minar.

Twin blows to Aussies

Series decider against Lanka today

Cricket

AFP, Adelaide

Australia captain Michael Clarke and young pacer James Pattinson were Wednesday ruled out of the Commonwealth Bank tri-series decider against Sri Lanka, as coach Mickey Arthur demanded a new strategy.

Clarke scored a century in Australia's crushing loss to Sri Lanka as the visitors levelled the series 1-1 in Adelaide on Tuesday, but it came at a price.

He strained a hamstring which not only ruled him out of the final tri-series game on Thursday, but could also see him miss the start of this month's tour of the West Indies where Australia will play five one-dayers and three Tests.

"It doesn't look great for certainly the early part of the one-day series in the West Indies," Arthur told reporters of Clarke, who was due to have scans later Wednesday.

Clarke only returned to action last week-

end from a strain to his right hamstring, which sidelined him for three games.

Pattinson will also miss the match with a buttock strain.

Sri Lanka blazed to an emphatic eight-wicket victory Tuesday with the World Cup finalists easily running down Australia's 271 for six to post 274-2 with 34 balls to spare.

Arthur was not happy with the scale of the defeat and said Australia needed to go back to the drawing board.

"It simply wasn't good enough. There was no excuse for it," he said.

"We need to play in a different way in these conditions which are totally different.

"We have had a couple of serious chats... we are looking at ways we can beat Sri Lanka in these conditions.

"We will have a couple of tricks up our sleeve tomorrow and hopefully they work for us. We have given a lot of thought to them."

Spinner Nathan Lyon is likely to replace Pattinson, with Peter Forrest tipped to take Clarke's place.



PHOTO: AFP

Australia pacer Ben Hilfenhaus sends down a delivery during net practice in Adelaide yesterday, ahead of today's third final of the CB series against Sri Lanka.

Jamal in AFC President's Cup

SPORTS REPORTER

Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club, the defending champions of Bangladesh League, have been drawn in Group A in the AFC President's Cup which will take place this year but schedules and timing has not been finalised yet.

Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club, who emerged champions in their first appearance of the professional football league and thus secured the ticket of President's Cup, will face hosts Pakistan's KRL Football Club, Taiwan power Company of Chinese Taipei and Irachim FC of Mongolia, said a BFF press release yesterday.

Abahani had earlier taken part in the AFC President's Cup three times but never crossed the group stage.

Dav ready for Asia Cup

Cricket

AFP, Karachi

Pakistan's new coach Dav Whatmore said Wednesday he was ready for next week's four-nation Asia Cup and is confident that his team will overcome their recent one-day slump.

The 57-year-old former Australian batsman, who coached Sri Lanka to a World Cup title in 1996, took charge of Pakistan last week on a two-year contract with his first assignment in Dhaka.

Defending champions India join Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Bangladesh in the biennial Asia Cup which runs over March 11-22.

Whatmore said he is looking forward to the Asia Cup, at which Pakistan will meet arch-rivals India on March 18.

"I know the Asia Cup is an important event with top class teams, even Bangladesh can be a tough opponent as they are playing on their home grounds, so it is one of the many tests that we have and we are looking forward to it," Whatmore told reporters.

The Pakistan team fly to Dhaka late Wednesday and play their opening match

against the hosts Sunday.

"We know there is an extra interest attached to the India game and it's good for the teams, for cricket and for the players but we are going to treat that match as any other game," said Whatmore.

The March 18 match in Dhaka will be the first between the two countries since the high-voltage World Cup 2011 semifinal clash in March at Mohali, which India won before taking the title.

Whatmore hoped Pakistan have learnt from their mistakes after their 4-0 and 2-1 defeats in the one-day and Twenty20 matches against England in the United Arab Emirates last month.

"That was little bit not in the script but this team wants to make amends to what happened in the one-day after their brilliant performance in the Test series," said Whatmore of the Tests in which Pakistan whitewashed England 3-0.

"Every player wants to look forward and make amends in the Asia Cup.

"These Pakistan players are wonderful and talented and welcomed me and its pleasure to be with them and we will work together to do well."

CEC backs

FROM PAGE 16 tour should proceed and the ICC determining that it was unsafe to appoint match officials for the tour, a special dispensation to depart from the Standard Playing Conditions to allow non-neutral match officials to officiate would be required from the ICC Board.

"Bearing in mind that safety and security is the sole responsibility of individual Member Board's for bilateral matches, the CEC regarded this as an exceptional circumstance in which the appointment to matches of non-neutral match officials could be justified but stated clearly that it should not be regarded as a preferred option or precedent if the dispensation were to be granted," said Haroon Lograt, the ICC chief executive.

Recently a nine-member security team visited Pakistan to evaluate the security arrangements ahead of Bangladesh's proposed tour in April.

Pakistani cricket has suffered a dearth of international tours to the country since the 2009 attack on the Sri Lankan team bus in Lahore.

Akram's heroic

FROM PAGE 16 that time and we wanted him to play two Tests but he didn't play. We weren't able to take that decision independently," he said.

Akram has also hinted that the cricket board is hampering the team's stability. "A team can only do well if they have established players. Take a look around the world; a player who is established in a certain position will do better. My target was to make an established team, but we had to tinker with it," explained Akram.

Bashar said that the decision has come as a shock to him. "We have worked together for seven months, and I believe that we have worked hard and honestly. For us it is a little shocking," he said.

In the face of utmost pressure, a man most unlikely to walk out has boldly done so. This is a decision that will give Bangladesh cricket a lot of strength at a time of tremendous need.

Club shooting

FROM PAGE 16 directors Kazi Baharul Islam will declare the three-day meet open as chief guest.

Sonali Bank general manager Nawsher Ali Khandokar, DGM of International business (finance) Altaf Hossain and NSF vice president Kutubuddin Aksir were among others present.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down. Includes a solution key for the crossword.

Cryptoquip puzzle grid with letters and numbers for solving.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF A WOMAN WRITES PRODUCT ARTICLES FOR CONSUMER REPORTS, YOU MIGHT SAY SHE'S A LADY IN RATING. Today's Cryptoquip Clue: U equals Y

Advertisement for Bangladesh Development Bank (BDBL) regarding a tour and security arrangements.