

Kumar's Wisden double

Cricket

AFP, London

Sri Lanka's Kumar Sangakkara has been chosen as both one of the Five Cricketers of the Year and the Leading Cricketer in the World for 2011 in the 2012 edition of Wisden Cricketers' Almanack, it was announced Wednesday.

The 34-year-old Sangakkara, one of the outstanding batsmen of his generation and for much of his career a top-class wicketkeeper as well, became the first man to receive both awards since Wisden, 'cricket's bible', started naming a leading cricketer of the year in 2004.

In 2011, no-one else came close to the 2,267 runs Sangakkara scored in all international cricket, and he is now the only man to have topped 1,000 runs in Tests and one-day internationals in a

single year on three separate occasions.

The left-hander also captained Sri Lanka to the World Cup final, where they were beaten by co-hosts India in Mumbai.

Off the field, he also received worldwide praise for giving a deeply heartfelt MCC Cowdrey Lecture at Lord's which caused shockwaves in his homeland when he called for the end of political interference in Sri Lankan cricket.

Sangakkara's career Test record of over 9,000 runs in 108 matches with 28 hundreds at an average of nearly 55 stands comparison with all but a handful of cricket's greatest batsmen.

Wisden, published every year since 1864, is widely regarded as cricket's leading reference work.

The Five Cricketers of the Year, chosen solely by the editor of Wisden -- the 2012 edition is English cricket journal-

ist Lawrence Booth's first as editor -- is an award that dates back to 1889.

Among the other four recipients for their performances in 2011 were the England Test duo of run-hungry opener Alastair Cook, who made 294 against India at Edgbaston, and pace bowling all-rounder Tim Bresnan, yet to be on the losing side in a Test match.

Lancashire captain Glen Chapple was also honoured after leading the Old Trafford-based club to their first outright County Championship title in 77 years, as was fellow seamer Alan Richardson, who took 73 First Division wickets to help Worcestershire avoid relegation.

No one can be chosen as one of the Cricketers of the Year, based primarily on a player's influence upon the previous English season, more than once.

Booth urges India to put record straight

Cricket

AFP, London

Cricket officials in India have been urged by the new editor of Wisden Cricketers' Almanack to abandon the "self interest of the few" and concentrate instead upon improving their team's Test results.

India is cricket financial's powerhouse, with the passionate following for the sport in the world's second most populous nation making its broadcast and commercial rights the most valuable in the game.

As a result, India is able to attract leading players from around the world to the lucrative but domestic Twenty20 Indian Premier League (IPL) tournament.

However, five-day Test cricket is still regarded by officials and players as the ultimate form of the sport yet in 2011 India were whitewashed in a series in England before, in early 2012, suffering a similar fate in Australia.

But 2011 also saw India lift the one-day World Cup for the first time in 28 years after they triumphed on home soil to beat Sri Lanka in a final in Mumbai.

In the 2012 Wisden, new editor Lawrence Booth -- an English cricket journalist -- writes: "India have ended up with a special gift: the clout to shape an entire sport.

"Some national boards would struggle to survive without an Indian visit.

"But too often their game appears driven by the self-interest of the few -- officials unable to admit that injuries collected in or aggravated by the IPL damaged their side's chances in England; capable of suggesting disregard for the innings defeat at Sydney in

January 2012 by responding with the breathless news of the schedule for IPL 5; and happy to whitewash the whitewashes with constant reference to the World Cup."

Booth added the rest of cricket's leading nations were not paragons of virtue either but that the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) were in a unique position.

"Other countries run the game along self-serving lines too; cricket's boardrooms are not awash with altruism. But none wields the BCCI's power, nor shares their responsibility.

"The disintegration of India's feted batting line-up has coincided with the rise of a Twenty20-based nationalism, the growth of private marketeers and high-level conflicts of interest. It is a perfect storm. And the global game sits unsteadily in the eye. India, your sport needs you."

Booth, turning his fire on officials elsewhere in the world, also said any Test series not involving Bangladesh and Zimbabwe, the five-day game's two weakest nations, must be for a minimum of three matches.

"At international level the administrators' insistence on Test cricket's primacy has been stated so often as to have lost any meaning," he wrote.

"The proof of the pudding came in a canape -- the two-Test series in November between South Africa and Australia, when a pair of classics left the players craving a decider."

Once a review primarily of English cricket alone Wisden, published annually and continuously since 1864, is now widely regarded as world cricket's leading reference work and known as the sport's 'bible'.

Rudisha eyes Olympic gold

AFP, Paris

Kenyan track star David Rudisha is aiming to add Olympic gold to his world 800m title from Daegu, with three Diamond League outings likely before the London Games, starting in Doha next month.

"I feel good and my preparations are going well," said the 23-year-old, who twice lowered the world record in the two-lap event for a best of 1min 41.01sec in 2010.

Rudisha is also seeking to bag a third consecutive Diamond Trophy after starring on the Diamond League circuit over the last two seasons, and says competing at such a high level of competition was essential for him ahead of the Olympics.

"It is a great thing to win the Diamond League since it shows your persistence to compete throughout a season," he said in an IAAF conference call on Wednesday.

"Racing in the Diamond League is part of my preparations this year, just like in the other years; racing in the Diamond League was part of my preparations for breaking the world record (in 2010) and for the World Championships last year."

Rudisha suffered the heartbreak of not making the 2008 Beijing Olympics after picking up an injury and acknowledged that he still had to negotiate the notoriously tough Kenyan Olympic trials to get a ticket to London.

"This will be my first Olympics although of course I still have to get through the Kenyan trials.

"I have always been having that dream that I can go to the Olympics and I have the dream of hearing the Kenyan national anthem as I stand on the podium.

"It would be a great feeling because winning at the Olympics is no small achievement. It's what I have always wished for."

Turning his sights to potential rivals this season, Rudisha admitted that "there will be a lot of good guys, many Kenyans".

"I also know (Sudan's) Abubaker Kaki will be there but I don't know if he will run the 800m or 1500m. However, I don't think about one particular person or another. I train to be ready to handle any situation."



PHOTO: AFP
Australia bowler Ben Hilfenhaus (R) is congratulated by teammates after dismissing West Indies batsman Carlton Baugh, his fourth wicket of the second innings, during the final day of the first Test at the Kensington Oval in Bridgetown yesterday.

Australia need 192

FROM PAGE 16
It's tough. It's tough on you mentally, it's tough on you physically. That three hour session this morning was tough on the guys but they hung in."

However, Gibson still believed his side could win.

"We believe if we get 200 on the board it'll be a very interesting run chase tomorrow (Wednesday)"

It was a remarkable turnaround in fortunes as the Australians had at one point been 199 runs behind with only three first innings wickets remaining.

The West Indies had looked like wrapping things up quickly when they took two early wickets in the morning session especially as one was the redoubtable veteran Mike Hussey.

However, Harris steadied the ship and played positively from the start of his

innings as he and Matthew Wade added 35 runs for the eighth wicket.

Wade fell for 28 in his first Test innings when he took a wild drive at a wide Fidel Edwards ball that Darren Bravo took easily at second slip.

SCOREBOARD
WEST INDIES: First innings 449 for 9 declared (Chanderpaul 103 not out, K Edwards 61; Warner 2-45, Harris 2-83)
AUSTRALIA: First innings
Cowan c Baugh b Sammy 14
Warner c Bravo b Sammy 42
Watson c Baugh b Roach 39
Ponting run out 4
Clarke c Deonarine b Bishoo 73
Hussey c Baugh b Roach 48
Wade c Bravo b F Edwards 28
Siddle c K Edwards b F Edwards 0
Harris not out 68
Hilfenhaus b Roach 24
Lyon not out 40
Extras: (lb-3, w-5, nb-5) 26
Total: (For 9 wks dead in 145 overs) 406

Fall of wickets: 1-50, 2-65, 3-83, 4-133, 5-215, 6-249, 7-250, 8-285, 9-329.

Bowler	O	M	R	W
F Edwards	31	4	92	2
Roach	29	8	72	3
Bishoo	45	10	125	1
Sammy	21	6	65	2
Deonarine	19	5	36	0

WEST INDIES: Second innings (overnight 71 for 5)
Barath b Hilfenhaus 2
Brathwaite c Wade b Hilfenhaus 0
Edwards lbw b Hilfenhaus 1
Bravo c Wade b Siddle 32
Chanderpaul c Wade b Harris 12
Deonarine lbw b Harris 21
Baugh c Harris b Hilfenhaus 23
Sammy b Watson 14
Roach b Harris 25
Edwards c Watson b Siddle 3
Bishoo not out 7
Extras: (b-4, lb-3, nb-1) 8
Total: (All out in 66.4 overs) 148
Fall of wickets: 1-2, 2-3, 3-4, 4-17, 5-67, 6-75, 7-106, 8-116, 9-125, 10-148.

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Hilfenhaus	17	7	27	4
Watson	12	1	30	1

BFF receive

FROM PAGE 16
Club while the name of the referees' association was also not sent in proper way.

The hearing regarding the allegations will take place today.

Past inspires

FROM PAGE 16
includes five major champions. Siddikur will be up against the likes of Louis Oosthuizen of South Africa, Charl Schwartzel and Martin Kaymer of Germany, defending champion Matteo Manassero of Italy, current Asian Order of Merit leader Jbe Kruger of South Africa and a host of Asian stars.



PHOTO: AFP
India's World Cup superstar Yuvraj Singh, who recently recovered from a cancerous tumour, addresses a press conference in Gurgaon yesterday.

Yuvi will need time

Cricket

AFP, New Delhi

India's World Cup hero Yuvraj Singh on Wednesday vowed to return to cricket after recovering from a cancerous tumour, but was unable to set a timeline for his comeback.

"I want to see the Team India logo on my cap again," Yuvraj, 30, told a media conference after his return from the United States where he underwent chemotherapy treatment for a rare germ-cell tumour between his lungs.

"It will be a big achievement if I can play for India again. But it won't be easy and will take time. I can't say when I will return to the field.

"At this stage, it is more important for me to focus on my priority, and that is to get fit and stay healthy. But I am positive that I will play cricket again."

Yuvraj, a left-handed all-rounder who was named the man-of-the-tournament after India's World Cup triumph in April last year, said he found it tough to watch cricket on TV during his treatment.

"I tried not to watch," he said. "It was so frustrating to sit before the TV and watch India play. It was painful to see that I was not on the field.

"But my family and friends helped me overcome what has been most difficult period of my life. It was so hard to believe that I had cancer, that an athlete like me could have cancer.

"I felt breathless and even spat blood

sometimes. But I thought it will go away. It really hit me hard when I was told that I was suffering from cancer."

Thousands of well-wishers, politicians, teammates and other sports personalities, including US cycling great Lance Armstrong, had sent messages of support to Yuvraj during his treatment.

"People like Armstrong are such an inspiration," Yuvraj said of the cyclist who overcame testicular cancer to win the Tour de France seven times.

Delhi-based oncologist Nitesh Rohatgi, who was part of the medical team treating Yuvraj, said the chemotherapy treatment had been successful and there was only a "3-4 per cent" chance of a relapse.

"I can confirm the response from the chemotherapy has been very good," Rohatgi said at the same media conference. "He should be able to do light training in a few weeks.

"A lot will depend on his physical and mental strength if he is to make a serious comeback."

Yuvraj, known for his hard and clean hitting and tidy spin bowling, scored 362 runs and bagged 15 wickets in nine World Cup matches to play a key role in India's triumph at the event.

The all-rounder has not played competitive cricket since taking part in two home Tests against the West Indies in November.

Yuvraj has scored 8,051 runs in 274 one-dayers and 1,775 in 37 Tests since making his international debut in 2000.

Fewer draws are result of good pitches: Atkinson

Cricket

REUTERS, Dubai

A recent reduction in Test draws is due to wickets around the world offering a better balance between bat and ball, International Cricket Council (ICC) pitches consultant Andy Atkinson said on Tuesday.

The ICC, the game's governing body, said in a news release on Tuesday the number of draws in the five-day game had dropped from 38 per cent in 2010 to 10 per cent last year.

"In Tests we are looking for a pitch that is fair to bat and ball and in the last

18 months or so we have got more of that and a lot more positive Test results," Atkinson told Reuters.

He was speaking ahead of a two-day workshop in Dubai starting on Wednesday involving groundsmen from each of the 10 Test-playing countries plus three from second-tier nations.

Atkinson has prepared surfaces all over the world and will be a central figure in the discussions at the ICC's offices.

"What we are trying to do is reinforce the message that you need to prepare a different pitch for a five-day Test than you would for a one-day game," he said.

"The balance you are looking to

achieve between bat and ball for a five-day game is about 50-50 but, although bowlers might disagree, for a 50-over or 20-over-a-side match it needs to be in favour of the batsmen as people want to see fours and sixes."

The future of Tests has provoked significant debate in the face of the rise of the popular Twenty20 format and ICC chief executive Haroon Lorgat said fewer draws was a positive sign for the longest form of the game.

"Curators and groundsmen around the world deserve credit for preparing outstanding pitches which have produced thrilling Test match cricket in recent times," he said in the news release.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
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15			16				17				
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43	44			45			46		47	48	49
50				51	52	53					
54				55				56			
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ACROSS
1 Snake's tooth
5 Billboards
8 Song's ending
12 Waikiki
13 Floral garland
14 Press
15 Going around the Earth
17 Fit of peevishness
18 Rigatoni, e.g.
19 Greek under-world goddess
21 — and crafts
24 — de plume
25 Heath
28 Re planes
30 Sprite
33 Hobby of hockey
34 Oust
35 Keanu, in "The Matrix"
36 Cribbage scorer
37 Give as an example

DOWN
1 Dud
2 Emanation
3 Arrests
4 Elvis' instrument
5 "The Greatest"
6 Lair
7 Sound of relief
8 Lake herring
9 Decoration
10 —
11 Initial chip
16 Pitch
20 Certain compound
22 Urban transport
23 Dividing walls
25 Swab the deck
26 Raw rock
27 Arrange systematically
29 Spool
31 Grazing land
32 Watch chain
34 Reverberate
38 Lady of Spain
40 Item in the plus column
42 " — la la!"
43 Greet the villain
44 Slightly
45 Sulk
47 "American —"
48 Pop flavor
49 Former spouses
52 Rule, for short
53 It's game?

Solution time: 21 mins.

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

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CRYPTOQUIP

MJIC H NFQI-FC CHCCE AIBU
VDIUUIV IQIDE YWDCFCA,
WCI MWGNV IUUGYI UJI
RGPU WC HG RHPD HRRHDIN.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IN ORDER TO PURCHASE A SHORT-TERM-USE CAMERA OR LIGHTER, MIGHT ONE BE USING DISPOSABLE INCOME?
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: C equals N