

All in the hype

Cricket

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What separates the likes of Viv Richards, Dennis Lillee and Shane Warne from Javed Miandad, Joel Garner and Abdul Qudair's of the world? It is not quality or greatness, for both groups have that in about the same measure, so what is it? Hype.

Hype builds around certain players for whatever mysterious reason. Everyone talks about them. Everyone celebrates their greatness. For the most part, such hype is justified, for players who elicit such responses are great players. But what about those players, every bit as good, who for whatever mysterious reason, do not generate such hype? What is their fate in the whimsically romantic eye of cricket lore? Usually, but not always, the dustbin.

Lillee averaged 23.92 for 355 Test wickets. Amongst his contemporaries alone, Michael Holding, Joel Garner, Imran Khan, Richard Hadlee and Malcolm Marshall all have better averages. Imran, Marshall, Hadlee, as well as Ian Botham and India's Kapil Dev took more wickets. Who makes it into espn's all time world 11 chosen by

experts? You guessed it

Warne had a splendid record, but his contemporary, Muralidharan, had better stats in every format and every level of the game, as well as a better Test average against every opposition. Brian Lara thought Mushtaq Ahmed a better bowler than Warne, while Graham Gooch found Abdul Qudair tougher to face. Who makes it into cricinfo's 11 unanimously? You guessed it.

Viv Richards' contemporaries include Gavaskar, Greg Chappell, Javed

ESPN cricinfo experts who selected All-time

World 11: Intikhab Alam, Ali Bacher, Ian Chappell, David Frith, Tony Greig, Ramachandra Guha, Gideon Haigh, Clive Lloyd, Duleep Mendis,

Miandad and Border. All have better averages, and only Chappell has fewer runs. All had to face the West Indian pace attacks probably the greatest in history, which Richards did not. Guess who makes it into the 11?

The tale of the top English batsmen in the post-war era illustrates the concept of hype about as well as anything can. Peter May (average 47) was celebrated above all others. Colin Cowdrey and Ted Dexter (averages 44 and 47, respectively) were not too far

behind. Do you know who did not get much hype? Someone named Ken Barrington, despite the small matter of an average reading 58.67. He scored more runs than May and Dexter, too.

Victor Trumper played Test cricket for Australia from the late 1800s to the early part of the last century. His compatriot, Clem Hill, has almost the identical figures, but Trumper has always been rated the greater because of the beauty of his style. Fair enough. Things being more or less equal statistically, one can look to such subjective elements to raise one above another. It is peculiar, however, that when a batsman, who was considered ugly of style, came up some 20 odd years after Trumper's time, the wisdom of the time insisted that Trumper was greater than this ugly duckling.

The ugly duckling's name was Don Bradman. He averaged 99, to Trumper's 39.

Richards, Warne and Lillee are all top class players beyond dispute. But why so far more celebrated than contemporaries who were equally (sometimes slightly more) successful?

Hype. Believe the hype it's probably true but keep in mind for every player who hits the headlines, there are two

Pybus to arrive today

SPORTS REPORTER

The newly-appointed Richard Pybus will arrive today to take charge of the Bangladesh national team for next two years as a head coach.

The first assignment for the new Bangladesh coach is the upcoming Zimbabwe tour. Mushfiqur Rahim's men will leave on June 12 for Harare to play an unofficial tri-nation tournament involving Zimbabwe, Bangladesh and South Africa. After that Bangladesh is scheduled to play T20 matches in Trinidad & Tobago, Ireland and the Netherlands before the ICC Twenty20 World Cup to be held in Sri Lanka in September.

The 47-year old Englishman has been confirmed as a new Bangladesh cricket team coach on May 30 for a two-year term.

He is Bangladesh's third coach in a year as Stuart Law, who resigned in April due to family commitments, had been in the post for only nine months after succeeding another Australian Jamie Siddons last July.

Gregarious dominant

SPORTS REPORTER

The Gregarious had a comfortable 102-40 point victory over Mohammadpur Basketball Club in the Citycell Premier Division Basketball League at the Dhanmondi Basketball Gymnasium yesterday. The Gregarious almost ensured their victory by the end of the first half as they led by 46-17 points. For the Gregarious, Mithun (27 points) and Shoaib (16 points) and for Mohammadpur, Jaymul (10 points) and Jajib (9 points) were the top scorers.

The Gregarious had previously won on Thursday against Bakshibazar 102-50. Mithun (32 points) and Shoaib (22 points) were the top scorers for The Gregarious while for Bakshibazar, Asif (16 points) and Ayon (10 points) led the scoring.

In the other match taking place on Thursday night, Europa Youth defeated Mohammadpur

Champions Trophy final in Edgbaston

CRICINFO, London

England will host the 2013 ICC Champions Trophy in Cardiff, at Edgbaston and at The Oval from June 6 to 23, the ECB has confirmed. Edgbaston will host the final of the tournament, which will be the last time it is played as the ICC moves towards having one championship for each of the game's three formats from 2015.

"Wales has earned an outstanding reputation for its ability to deliver world-class sporting events and we are delighted that Cardiff will be used as a host venue for the ICC Champions Trophy and stage a semi-final," David Collier, the chief executive of the ECB, said.

England last hosted the Champions Trophy in 2004, with West Indies emerging victorious. The ten Test-playing nations joined USA and Kenya to compete in fifteen matches during that series.

SCHEDULE
Group stage: June 6-17 (Cardiff, Edgbaston and The Oval)
Semi-finals: June 19 (The Oval), June 20 (Cardiff)
Final: June 23 (Edgbaston)



Sri Lanka pacer Nuwan Kulasekera (C) celebrates with his teammates after dismissing Pakistan captain Mohammad Hafeez (unseen) during the first Twenty20 match at the Suriyawewa Mahinda Rajapakse International Cricket Stadium in Hambantota yesterday.

SL crush Pakistan

Cricket

SPORTS DESK

A superb bowling performance from Sri Lanka saw them coast to a 37 run victory over Pakistan in a low scoring first T20 international at Hambantota on Friday.

Defending a paltry total of 132, Sri Lanka got off to a dream start with two wickets from the first two balls by Nuwan Kulasekera derailed the Pakistani train from which they never recovered.

Pakistan only managed 95 in 17.4 overs with only Ahmed Shehzad with 36 and Umar Akmal managing to make double figures.

Earlier, Sohail Tanvir grabbed three big wickets as Pakistan restricted Sri Lanka to 132-7.

The left-arm paceman jolted Sri Lanka's top order when he dismissed skipper Mahela Jayawardene, Tillakaratne Dilshan and Kumar Sangakkara in his opening three

overs to reduce the hosts to 31-3.

Tanvir finished with 3-12 off four tight overs, his best performance in Twenty20 internationals. He was superbly backed by off-spinner Saeed Ajmal, who bagged two wickets for 20 runs.

Thisara Perera top-scored with a 16-ball 32 not out in Sri Lanka's below-par batting display, helping his team make 43 runs off the last 22 balls.

Lahiru Thirimanne, making his T20 debut, was the other main scorer with a 25-ball 30.

Sri Lanka made a poor start after electing to bat, losing four wickets in the opening eight overs with just 39 on the board.

SCORES IN BRIEF

SRI LANKA: 132 for 7 (Sangakkara 19, Thirimanne 30, Perera 32 not out; Tanvir 3-12, Ajmal 2-20)

PAKISTAN: 95 all out (Shehzad 36; Kulasekara 2-13, Malinga 2-12)

Result: Sri Lanka won by 37 runs.

Man-of-the-match: Thisara Perera.

Tsonga, Berdych in last 16

French Open

AFP, Paris

Jo-Wilfried Tsonga did his part to keep alive home hopes of a first men's champion at Roland Garros since 1983 when he swept past colourful Italian Fabio Fognini to reach the French Open last 16 on Friday.

Fifth seed Tsonga won 7-5, 6-4, 6-4 against the 45th-ranked Fognini and could meet compatriot Gilles Simon for a place in the last eight should the 11th seed get past Stanislas Wawrinka, the 18th-seeded Swiss.

It was Tsonga's second win in two meetings with Fognini, who reached the quarterfinals last year only for a thigh injury to force him to withdraw and hand Novak Djokovic a walkover

into the semifinals.

Seventh-seeded Czech Tomas Berdych ended Kevin Anderson's hopes of becoming the first South African man to reach the last 16 of a Grand Slam for nine years in a third round slugfest.

After taking two sets to one lead, he ran out of steam in the final set, when he needed treatment on his left thigh at every changeover, and lost 6-4, 3-6, 6-7 (4/7), 6-4, 6-4, eight minutes short of four hours.

Former champion Svetlana Kuznetsova made a mockery of the seedings by outclassing third seed Agnieszka Radwanska of Poland 6-1, 6-2 in the third round.

There was no such revival in fortunes for Ana Ivanovic, another former champion at Roland Garros who has found the going tough since her triumph in 2008.

The Serb, a former world number one, but seeded just 13th this year, looked comfortable in the first set against clay court specialist Sara Errani, but her game started to unwind in the second as the little Italian retrieved everything that came her way to run out a 1-6, 7-5, 6-3 winner.

Also through, but playing in the previous round, was second-seeded Maria Sharapova.

The Russian pulled off a routine 6-1, 6-1 win over Ayumi Morita of Japan in a match that was held over from Thursday because of the marathon clash between Paul-Henri Mathieu and John Isner.

Australian sixth seed Samantha Stosur, the runner-up here in 2010, coasted past Russia's Nadia Petrova 6-3, 6-3 and will next play American teenager Sloane Stephens.



Russia's Maria Sharapova exults after winning the second round match of the French Open against Japan's Ayumi Morita at the Roland Garros in Paris yesterday.

Season that had it all ICC retains

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the order for Prime Bank. He told me to play my game at the top of the order and that really was helpful," he said.

It was a busy season for Ziaur, as he also played regularly for Khulna in the National Cricket League but during the first-class competition, he was met with a tragedy. His first child, a baby girl, died 40 hours after being born. He took the loss in his stride and continued to play the game, his bread-winner.

According to those he plays with, his loss has made him mellow but Ziaur remains the likable teammate that everyone knew. But his insistence that it wasn't too important at just getting the opportunity was slightly surprising. Was he too harsh on himself?

"I'm not too hard on myself (laughs). But I believe in performance and since I did well this season, I think that I should perform in the national team.

"I never thought of getting a place in the side when the season started, I focused more on the performance," said Ziaur.

Some of these picks by the selectors might be questioned as having belated wisdom because a few Twenty20 specialists should have been prepared by now, but Ziaur's call-up should be encouraging news for the rest of the cricketers in the country.

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sensor has been developed that can be worn during matches and would indicate whether or not the bowler's elbow is being straightened during the delivery swing.

Other changes which were recommended included an increase in the number of permitted short pitched deliveries from one to two per over in one-day cricket.

Powerplays should also be restricted to the first 10 overs plus one five-over batting powerplay to be completed by the 40th over. In a non-powerplay over, only four fielders ought to be allowed outside the 30 yard circle.

With regards to test cricket, the committee

suggested that drinks should not be brought on to the field other than at the official drinks breaks as well as urging teams not to waste time at referrals.

The committee also asked for more consultations on switch hitting and confirmed previous ICC plans for a 16-team World Twenty20 every two years from 2014.

Abahani's

FROM PAGE 16

Imran, and Ehsan Ullah and a goal from Sarwar Hossain.

In today's matches, Shonali Bank will take on Azad SC while Mariner Youngs will play against Police SC at the same venue.