

Aussie greats differ over sledging

AFP, London

Former Australia cricket captain Steve Waugh and swimming legend Kieren Perkins, both liaison officers with their country's Olympic delegation, clashed over the controversial use of sledging Saturday.

Waugh, who once referred to sledging as 'mental disintegration', insisted that there was a role for the tactic, whereby an opponent is subject to a constant barrage of insults aimed at undermining his confidence.

"There is always a role for sledging," Waugh said on Saturday.

"In any sport there are mind games but cricket is a bit different to most sports because you're out in the field for seven hours but most of these sports are shorter."

However, Perkins, the 1992 and 1996 Olympic gold medalist in the 1500m, said that the ploy was a sign of weakness on the part of the sledgers.

"The people who do the sledging generally aren't good enough, so they have to find other ways to slow us down," said the 38-year-old.

"Those of us that are good enough just get on with it."

Tigers owe

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the 13th over as Mashrafe finished with his best figures in all Twenty20s.

SCORES IN BRIEF

IRELAND: 140-8 in 20 overs (Porterfield 28, Johnston 24*; Mashrafe 4-19).

BANGLADESH: 141-8 in 20 overs (Tamim 39, Mashrafe 30; Stirling 3-21).

Result: Bangladesh won by two wickets and win series 3-0.

Man-of-the-match: Mashrafe Bin Mortaza.

Serena skips exhibition match

AFP, Washington

Reigning Wimbledon champion Serena Williams has pulled out of an exhibition match to get treatment for back pain, but she said Friday that would not keep her out of the London Olympics.

Williams said she needed to rest her back after her two recent titles.

"I'm disappointed that I won't be able to see my (Washington) DC fans, but can't wait to go for gold in London," Williams said.

The American has never won an Olympic singles crown but she hopes to change that when Olympic tennis competitions begin on July 28 at Wimbledon.

Williams won her fifth Wimbledon title earlier this month and a week later she captured the Bank of the West Classic in California.

She announced that she was withdrawing from a World Team Tennis match in Washington on Sunday. She will be replaced by her sister Venus.

Torch on Tour

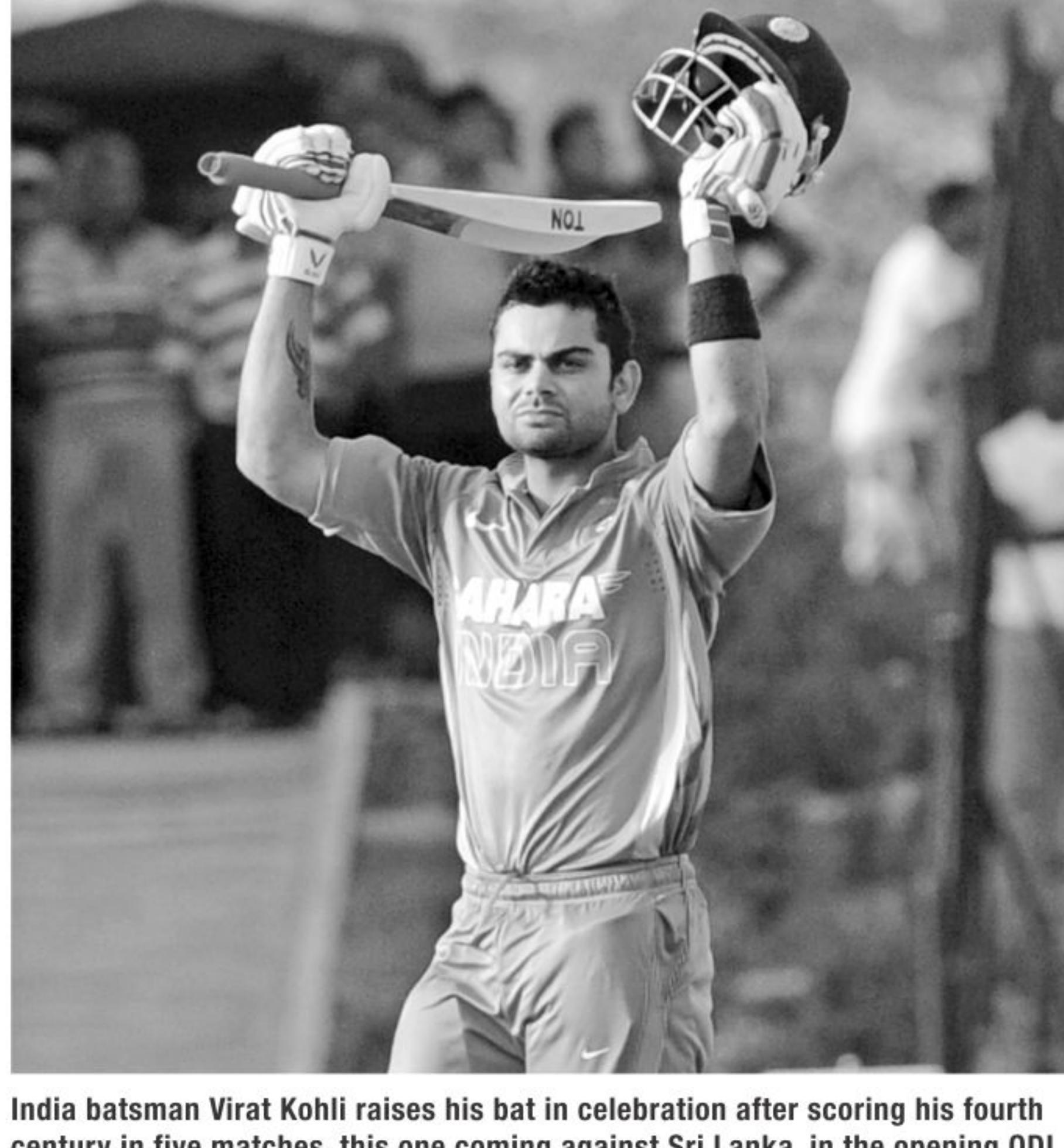
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flame to the host city, abseiling from a Sea King helicopter hovering over the entrance to the Tower of London.

"I obviously checked out the view on the way in and saw London and everybody down here and you think, 'wow this is a bit more than just a normal abseil,'" he told AFP.

"But as soon as I got in the door and got my hands on the rope, it is just another abseil from a helicopter so I just had to come down as per usual."

"I said I'd like to do it and the job came to me so I'm very lucky and very proud to be here."



India batsman Virat Kohli raises his bat in celebration after scoring his fourth century in five matches, this one coming against Sri Lanka, in the opening ODI at the Suriyawewa Mahinda Rajapakse International Cricket Stadium in Hambantota yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Kohli powers India

Cricket

AFP, Hambantota

Virat Kohli hit an impressive century to set up India's 21-run victory over Sri Lanka in the opening one-day international in Hambantota on Saturday.

Kohli cracked 106 for his 12th one-day hundred, and the fourth in the last five matches, as India scored 314-6 before restricting Sri Lanka to 293-9 in the day-night game for a 1-0 lead in the five-match series.

Sri Lankan Kumar Sangakkara defied the Indian attack, top-scoring with 133 for his 14th one-day hundred. He hit 12 fours in his 151-ball knock before being bowled by seamer Umesh Yadav in the 48th over.

Off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin, and seamers Irfan Pathan and Umesh Yadav each took two wickets for India.

Fall of wickets: 1-7, 2-180, 3-191, 4-228, 5-307, 6-307				
Bowler	O	M	R	W
Kulasekara	5	0	20	1
Malinda	10	0	83	0
Mathews	10	0	58	1
Perera	10	0	70	3
Dilshan	5	0	28	0
Herath	10	0	52	0
SRI LANKA				
Tharanga c Sehwag b Ashwin			28	
Dilshan lbw b Pathan			6	
Sangakkara b Yadav			133	
Chandimal c Dhoni b Yadav			13	
Jayawardene lbw b Ojha			12	
Mathews c Gambhir b Khan			7	
Thirimanne lbw b Ashwin			7	
Perera c Kohli b Pathan			44	
Herath run out (Raina)			0	
Malinda not out			19	
Kulasekara not out			1	
Extras: (b1, lb6, w16)			23	
Total: (For 9 wkt in 50 overs)			293	
Fall of wickets: 1-9, 2-86, 3-117, 4-132, 5-172, 6-191, 7-269, 8-271, 9-275				
Bowler	O	M	R	W
Raina c sub (Senanayake) b Perera	50	10	63	1
Sharma b Mathews	35	10	37	2
Pathan not out	7	Pathan	10	76
Ashwin not out	0	Yadav	10	46
Extras: (b1, lb2, nb2, w7)	12	Ashwin	10	2
Total: (For 6 wkt in 50 overs)	314	Sehwag	4	20

Kamran was included after ICC clearance

Cricket

PTI, Lahore

The chairman of Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Zaka Ashraf has clarified that wicketkeeper-batsman Kamran Akmal was included in the national team only after the ICC gave him clearance.

Kamran was recalled to the national Twenty20 squad for the upcoming series against Australia in the UAE and for the ICC T20 World Cup after being sidelined by the selectors and the board since the 2011 World Cup because of some of his suspicious performances.

"As regards Kamran Akmal, the PCB approached the ruling global body ICC and asked if the ICC had any objection to Kamran's selection.

"The ICC [International Cricket Council] said it had nothing against Kamran Akmal and when clearance came from ICC, then the PCB integrity committee cleared him for national selection," Ashraf was quoted as saying by a TV channel.

"Moreover Pakistan badly needed a keeper who could also contribute with the bat," Ashraf added.

The national selectors recalled Kamran after seeking clearance from the board for his selection.

The board had convened a meeting of its

integrity committee, which spoke to Kamran before clearing him for selection.

Since 2010, suspicions have been raised over some of Kamran's shoddy performances and he was also named during the spot-fixing trial last year in London in which Salman Butt, Mohammad Aamer and Mohammad Asif were later given different jail sentences for spot-fixing on the England tour in 2010.

Ashraf, who is clearly not in very good terms with his predecessor Ijaz Butt, said that despite ICC asking the former chief to take action against Salman Butt, Asif and Aamer, he did not do anything.

"The ICC had asked former Chairman of PCB Ijaz Butt to initiate action against Salman Butt, Asif and Aamer in Pakistan for involvement in spot-fixing. Unfortunately Mr Butt did not do it and then the ICC had to take action that resulted in long term bans and embarrassment," said Ashraf.

He also said the PCB had now decided to regulate and monitor the club and regional cricket as the ICC has informed the Board that it (ICC) had reports of corruption at lower level of cricket in Pakistan also.

The PCB from this year has made it mandatory for organisers to seek NOC from the board for organising private T20 tournaments during the month of Ramadan or at any time of the year.

Proteas lead thru'

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and Ricky Ponting.

It was his seventh century against England and continued a remarkable run of success in matches in England. He took his total of runs in the country to 1,214 at an average of 75.87. The tally includes five centuries, two of which were double hundreds.

Only Australia's Don Bradman, who scored 2,674 runs in England at 102.84, has a better average among visiting batsmen who have played in 10 or more innings.

SCOREBOARD

ENGLAND: First Innings 385 (Cook 115, Trott 71, Prior 60; Morkel 4-72)

SOUTHAFRICA: First Innings (overnight 86-1)

Smith b Bresnan 131

Petersen lbw b Anderson 0

Amla not out 183

Kallis not out 82

Extras: (b1, lb4, w1, nb1) 7

Total: (For 2 wkt in 135 overs) 403

Fall of wicket: 1-2, 2-260

Bowler O M R W

Anderson 29 6 90 1

Broad 26 4 87 0

Swann 42 10 99 0

Bresnan 24 2 77 1

Bopara 9 1 29 0

Pietersen 3 0 13 0

Sonali Bank

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The lead lasted only a minute as Imtiaz Ahmed scored a field goal for Ajax to make it 2-2 before the break. And soon after the restart, Ajax took the vital lead in the 38th minute through Faisal Hossain which also ensured their victory.

In the day's other match, Sadharan Bima recorded a 1-0 victory over Azad SC, thanks to a 68th minute strike from Russell Hossain Rony.

Meanwhile, joint leaders Mohammedan will have a chance to assume solo lead when they take on Mariner Youngs in today's lone match.

Condition not conducive

Akhtar asks PCB not to invite foreigners

Cricket

PTI, Lahore

Former Pakistan pacer Shoaib Akhtar has ruffled feathers in the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) and in government circles by suggesting that the board should avoid inviting foreign teams to the country because of the security situation here.

Former speedster, who regularly used to clash with the establishment during his playing days, told reporters in Rawalpindi that condition in Pakistan was not conducive for inviting foreign teams to play international cricket.

Former speedster, who regularly used to clash with the establishment during his playing days, told reporters in Rawalpindi that condition in Pakistan was not conducive for inviting foreign teams to play international cricket.

"Our citizens are not safe and there is a war going on in the country. Therefore, inviting a team in these conditions will be risky," he said.

"What if a visiting team is attacked again? So I would advise to the PCB not to invite foreign teams since the country is not in a position to stage any international event," he added.

Reacting to his statement, a board

official said Shoaib needed to understand the sensitivities of some issues.

"Everyone knows what the ground realities are in Pakistan at the moment but some things don't need to be stated publicly. But since he is a retired player he has the right to air his opinions although those views might not help Pakistan cricket," the official said.

No Test playing nation has visited Pakistan since militants attacked the Sri Lankan cricket team in Lahore in March 2009. And the PCB were being forced to organise its "home" series abroad at neutral venues with most of these being played in the United Arab Emirates in the last three years.

PCB is set to host Australia for a series in August in the UAE yet again.

However, since Zaka Ashraf took over as Chairman of the PCB last year in October he has been trying to not only convince teams to play in Pakistan but has recently also managed to resume bilateral ties with India.

In April Pakistan had invited Bangladesh to play a short series of two matches to signal the resumption of international cricket in Pakistan but

the tour didn't materialise at the last moment due to a court injunction in Dhaka.

The PCB, meanwhile, is also not happy with Shoaib's stating that he didn't see 70-year-old people in the board capable of organising the Pakistan Premier League (PPL).

"Seventy year old people can't organise the PPL. The PCB should hire services of foreign consultants instead of old people for hosting a successful event if it really wants to organise the PPL," the former fast bowler had said.

The board official said that the PCB was already in the process of appointing an independent commissioner for the PPL for which advertisement was placed for people to apply.

"We have even got some foreign companies to show interest in the PPL and make presentations. So apparently Shoaib is not aware of what is happening," he said.