

McCullum escapes fine

ANI, Hyderabad

New Zealand batsman Brendon McCullum has received an official reprimand after pleading guilty to a Level 1 breach of the ICC Code of Conduct during the fourth day's play in the first Test against India in Hyderabad on Sunday.

McCullum was found to have breached Article 2.1.3 of the code of the code which relates to "showing dissent at an umpire's decision during an international match".

After India won the Test by an innings and 115 runs, which has given the home side a 1-0 lead in the two-Test series, the opener admitted to the offence and accepted the proposed sanction offered to him by Chris Broad of the Emirates Elite Panel of ICC Match Referees. As such, there was no need for a formal hearing.

The charge was related to an incident in the 46th over of New Zealand's second innings when McCullum stood for an extended period of time, showed his bat to umpire Steve Davis after he had been given out LBW off Umesh Yadav, before leaving the field while shaking his head.

KP puts BBL on hold

ANI, Melbourne

Kevin Pietersen has put on hold a six-figure offer by Cricket Australia to play for the Big Bash champions Sydney Sixers with the disgruntled batsman's attempts to repair his relationship with the England team management still taking time.

England sacked Pietersen for disloyalty after he denigrated Test captain Andrew Strauss and his teammates in text messages to some South African players.

If the England Cricket Board's unforgiving mood continues and Pietersen is overlooked for the tour of India during the Australian summer, the Big Bash is likely to be Pietersen's best and only offer.

It could also mean that Pietersen misses successive Ashes series in England and Australia over the next 18 months, News.com.au reports.

If he plays in the Big Bash it may signal the beginning of Pietersen's new life as a player for Twenty20 tournaments around the world.

A desire to play in the IPL instead of tour New Zealand next year, is one of the many disputes Pietersen has with the ECB, when deciding a new contract, which may now never appear.

I love to take

FROM PAGE 16

make up for the first round exit from the Asia Cup. Unfortunately our middle order didn't click otherwise it could have been a different story and our bowlers were also not up to the mark compared to the Australia and South Africa attack.

DSS: What do you want to achieve in your career?

AH: Right at this moment my target is to sleep as much as possible (smile). Anyway I want to play for my country consistently for the next 15 years. I believe the talent is not enough to stay in the international cricket rather you have to make sure that you work hard to keep your position in the team first. I performed at different levels and now I have to prove that I'm good enough to play international cricket.

DSS: Who is your favourite cricketer?

AH: AB de Villiers is my favourite cricketer because he is good in all three formats of the game. I also like to watch the batting of Hashim Amla. In my country Shakib bhai (Shakib Al Hasan) and Mushfiq bhai (Mushfiqur Rahim) are my favourite cricketers.



Pakistan cricketer Shoaib Malik (L) throws a ball as star all-rounder Shahid Afridi (C) looks on during a training session at the Sharjah Cricket Stadium yesterday, ahead of the today's 1st ODI against Australia.

PHOTO: AFP

Australia to beat the heat

1st ODI against Pakistan today

Cricket

AFP, Dubai

Experienced batsman Michael Hussey said Australia were determined to bounce back by winning their limited series against Pakistan which starts in Sharjah on Tuesday.

The 37-year-old left-hander missed Australia's tour of England last month due to family reasons but believed Australia's 4-0 loss in his absence makes them more determined to win.

"We're very determined. The guys have got a real sting in the tail after losing in England and we want to put in a very good performance," said Hussey on Monday.

The ever-reliable Hussey, who has so far played 182 one-day and 78 Tests in a glorious career, believed a break was good for him.

"It was great to be back around the team, no question. Having a break makes you realise how much you enjoy playing for Australia and my enthusi-

asm and energy for the game has risen more by being able to have a rest," said Hussey.

Asked if Australia were as prepared for the Pakistan series, Hussey said: "It remains to be seen, I guess. We've won in places like India before. The last time we came here we beat Pakistan in one-days," said Hussey of the 3-2 win in 2009.

Hussey said his experience in the humid conditions of Chennai during his stint in the Indian Premier League will help him combat the oppressive 35-plus temperatures in United Arab Emirates.

"These conditions are very oppressive. But... the guys are in pretty good shape. When you do play pretty much all the previous year, there are times when you do start to get mentally and physically fatigued.

"I don't think we'll be letting the heat be an excuse for any poor performance. I've played in Chennai, even in just Twenty20 games, and that's a lot hotter than playing out here," Hussey said.

"In Chennai the temperature might be only mid-30s but the humidity is

unbelievable. That's probably the most oppressive conditions I've ever had to play in.

"Having said that, it's still extremely tough (in Sharjah). I only batted for 15 overs the other day and I was pretty knackered by the end of it," said Hussey of Australia's 66-run win against Afghanistan in Sharjah on Saturday.

He made a brisk 37-ball 49 in Australian total of 272-8 in 50 overs.

Hussey said he was ready to open the innings in case the team management asks him in order to shield Matthew Wade who opened the innings on Saturday and then kept wicket.

"Whatever the team needs," said Hussey. "If 'Wadey' did make a hundred in these oppressive conditions batting first and then has to go straight out and 'keep, that would be a difficult thing," Hussey said.

The second one-day will be played in Abu Dhabi on August 31 followed by the third in Sharjah on September 3. The three Twenty20 internationals will be played in Dubai on September 5, 7 and 10.

Pak spin a threat

Cricket

ANI, Sharjah

Australia's cricket captain Michael Clarke has admitted that Pakistan's spin attack, led by Saeed Ajmal, Shahid Afridi and Mohammad Hafeez, is a threat to his team's chances.

Clarke wants his pacers to channel their inner Dennis Lillee when they take the field for their one-day international (ODI) series against Pakistan starting on Tuesday in Sharjah.

So in the tradition of Wimbledon winner Pat Cash's 1980s sweatbands and the great pace spearhead Lillee's old headwear, Clarke said it's time to get back to the future, The AAP reports.

"Whoever bowls spin the best and whoever plays spin the best will win the series. Whether it is attacking or defending, the way our spinners bowl is going to be crucial to us having success. It doesn't mean they take all the wickets, as we've seen," Clarke said.

"The Australian way is, for a long time, fast bowlers have had success all around the

world. I see this series being no different but I do believe our spinners are going to play a huge part in us taking 10 wickets in every game," he said.

Pakistan have won their past eight ODI matches in Sharjah, where they've hosted games because of security problems back home.

Mitchell Starc, who took 4-47 and gained plenty of swing with his left-armers, said he was taken aback by the muggy conditions.

He said: "I don't think we thought too much about the humidity. We thought it was going to be a dry heat. As we've seen, it's more the sweat factor that is going to play a part and the dew as well.

"Both balls towards the end were quite hard to hold onto. You wipe yourself down with a towel and you're already sweating again. In the end, the bowlers did quite well to control that ball."

Australia's pacemen Starc, James Pattinson and Mitchell Johnson claimed nine wickets against Afghanistan, with Xavier Doherty taking 1-34.

'Team before individuals'

2nd Eng-SA ODI today

Cricket

AFP, London

England batsman Eoin Morgan admits Kevin Pietersen's fall from grace has emphasised the danger of letting individuals undermine team spirit.

Pietersen has been cast into exile by England after the controversial batsman infuriated captain Andrew Strauss and coach Andy Flower by sending text messages containing criticism of the duo to South Africa players.

The 32-year-old is also reported to have made England newboy James Taylor feel unwelcome when he joined up with the squad, prompting an unnamed senior player to become embroiled in a row with Pietersen.

The England and Wales Cricket Board remain tight-lipped about the prospect of Pietersen, who was dropped from the Test squad due to what Flower described as issues of "trust and mutual respect", returning to the fold any time soon.

While Morgan wasn't involved in Test series, the Irishman has been drafted in for the limited overs clashes with South Africa and, after assessing the mood in the camp, he believes it is vital that distractions like the Pietersen saga are quashed quickly to avoid bad feeling spreading

through the squad.

Speaking ahead of Tuesday's second one-day international in Southampton, Morgan said: "I think Kevin is a world-class cricketer and any team around the world would want him in their side, but there are issues surrounding him at the moment and it will take time to resolve them.

"Personally I didn't find him difficult but I've not been around the Test team a lot.

"I think that it is hugely important (to get the situation resolved) because the amount of time we spend together is huge. We spend more time together than with our families, particularly on tour.

"It is a huge factor and it has been for all the successful years we've had as the England cricket team."

England's one-day side have already had experience of coping without South Africa-born Pietersen, winning all six completed matches since his surprise retirement from limited-overs cricket earlier this year.

And Morgan, a senior figure in the white-ball side, has been impressed by England's strength in depth since Pietersen's exit.

"I think we've played fantastic cricket," he said. "The guys who have come in and replaced him have done particularly well. Whoever has stepped up has done really, really well.

"That's been important

to the winning run we've had, particularly against a top side like Australia.

"We've built some great blocks towards where we want to be in our progress as a one-day side. I think we have a lot of match-winners."

Despite his confidence, Morgan expects to be pushed all the way by the Proteas in the next four matches after the first match in Cardiff was washed out by heavy rain.

"We've been exceptional on our own turf for the last year and a half but there'll be a lot of hard work in this series because South Africa are a huge challenge," he said.

"Where we're at is we're a focused side, everyone knows their game plans well, everyone knows their role.

"But South Africa are a very formidable side too and a very successful side in the last five or six years."

Impaled

FROM PAGE 16

city's University Hospital, where he was operated on after losing a lot of blood from his main artery.

A group of seven spectators in the 800-strong crowd who witnessed the accident were given counselling at the scene as police evacuated the stadium.

After the accident, the meet was immediately cancelled.

Mahela salutes 'fantastic' VVS

Cricket

PTI, Colombo

Sri Lanka captain Mahela Jayawardena on Monday paid tribute to Indian veteran VVS Laxman, who recently retired from international cricket, saying that the game will be poorer without one of the finest players of this generation.

"Laxman was one of the finest players of our times and world cricket will miss him. He has contributed a lot to the game and to his country's success," Jayawardena said in an media interaction here at the sidelines of Sri Lanka Premier League.

"I don't know under what circumstances he retired but every international cricketer will have to take a call finally and he must have thought it was time for him

to go. Rahul (Dravid) surprised people when he decided to quit. VVS must also have some plan for his future.

"But you cannot take away his achievements as a cricketer. As a person also he is a fantastic guy," added the Wayamba United skipper.

Laxman announced his retirement from international cricket with immediate effect, even though he was selected for India's home Test series against New Zealand, before the first match at his home town Hyderabad.

Shifting to SLPL, Jayawardena was happy with Wayamba's performance as the team currently tops the points table with five wins from six league matches.

"We knew that SLPL will start small and grow in future. I am happy with the way things have gone this inaugural year. Some good domestic players are coming out of this tournament. Young

Indian players came through from IPL and I think this will happen in the SLPL also," he said.

Jayawardena was all praise for young off-spin sensation Akila Dananjaya, who he felt should be fast-tracked into the national team.

"I was surprised by his performance in the SLPL. He is a raw talent and will have to be handled carefully," said Jayawardena about Dananjaya, who was included in Sri Lanka's Twenty20 World Cup squad on the strength of his fine bowling performance in the SLPL.

The spinner had so far taken eight wickets from five matches for Wayamba.

Jayawardena, however, indicated that Dananjaya will not be straightway included in the Sri Lankan playing eleven.

Haroon

FROM PAGE 16

the one that took part in the AHF Cup in April.

During the two-week training, the coach has emphasised on penalty corners, build-up attack, territory defending and keeping ball possession.

The coach also believes that passing of the ball has improved which is helping them to keep possession.

However, Haroon feels three matches in consecutive days will be a disadvantage and taking on Hong Kong in the opening match would be their biggest challenge.

"We have to play consistently in all three matches in successive three days," said Haroon. "Hong Kong will be our main rivals as we have not faced them in the last two years after the 1-1 draw in the Asia Cup Qualifiers at home in 2010."

Bangladesh defeated Singapore and Thailand 4-1 and 9-0 respectively in the AHF Cup in April this year.

Bangladesh will start their HWL campaign on August 31 taking on Hong Kong followed by Singapore on September 1 and Thailand on September 2.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS	36 Suspicious	2 Son-gun link	22 Not merely prompt
1 — Alamos Springs org.	37 Big-time glitch	4 Alien Dark	23 Arguments in favor
8 Incite	41 Serve tea	5 High-protein bean	25 Incite
12 Sternward	42 Overly fearful	6 Wood-shaping tool	26 Academy Awards prop
13 Lump	46 Shrek, for one	7 Doctor's due	27 Layer
14 Beattle or apostle	47 High-lander	8 Maintenance	30 Birthright barterer
15 Render immobile	48 Thickness	9 Bar	33 Bruce Wayne's butler
17 Do in	49 Loathsome sort	10 Sea flier	34 A long time
18 Met melody	50 Pruritus	11 Right angles	36 Disinclined
19 Carillon components	51 — out a living	16 War god	37 Name for a Dalmatian
20 "Rocky Horror" heroine		19 Tolerate	38 "Forget it"
22 Duel tool	DOWN	20 Military vehicle	39 Emanation
24 Early birds?	1 You can't stand having one	21 Taj Mahal city	40 Gator's cousin
25 Protective walls			42 Omega precursor
29 Earlier than	Solution time: 25 mins.		43 Don't just sit there
30 Goof	ASPS BEG ACME LAIC ERA THIN AGAR FEZ EELS SAFAARI EPTIC WETBLANKET TWANG ALL OAR WINY DYE CURE OTTY BOO TITTLE SHEETMUSIC AQAUA APACHE TUTU TILL DUES ASEAN NEO ASAP CARL SIN SPRY		44 Sort
31 Pinch			45 Easter purchase
32 Sun-shades			
34 State with certainty			
35 — and the Tramp			

1	2	3		4	5	6	7		8	9	10	11
12				13					14			
15				16					17			
			18					19				
20	21					22	23					
24					25					26	27	28
29					30					31		
32				33					34			
			35					36				
37	38	39						40				
41					42	43				44	45	
46					47					48		
49					50					51		

CRYPTOQUIP

X P B H G V C H U N Y I S V S I C Z V
X G O Q X B H S V U B Y I O V T H I R B
R H C V Q V Z V I B V U , R M V S M V
B M H W Z U B O Q X S T P I Z Z T W N B .

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: HOLE DUG BY A WILD CRITTER FOR SCOUTING OUT THE UNDERGROUND VICINITY: BURROW OF INVESTIGATION.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: V equals E