

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 denied 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 (Mushfiq Rahim) are my favourite cricketers.

Higuain gave the visitors the lead from Angel di Maria's pass, using his strength to round the goalkeeper and slot the ball home.

After the break, Getafe came out looking to attack and got their reward with the unmarked Valera heading in from a free-kick.

Getafe struck again, with Adrian Colunga going past Raul Albiol and setting up Barrada to score.

Elsewhere, a 44th-minute equaliser from Spain international Alvaro Negredo earned Sevilla a 1-1 draw at Granada, while Valencia were set to host Deportivo La Coruna in Sunday's late match.



PHOTO: AFP

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.

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 enthusiasm 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-day," 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 the 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 Australia's 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.

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.

Messi stuns Osasuna

FROM PAGE 16

Roland Lamah sent a deep cross from the left wing that found Llorente -- on loan from Real Sociedad -- and he squeezed the ball in at the far post.

The game appeared to be going away from Barcelona but Messi popped up with two goals in the last 15 minutes to rescue them, first touching in a Sanchez cross and then finishing clinically with his left foot to condemn Osasuna.

La Liga champions Real Madrid crashed to a shock 2-1 defeat at derby rivals Getafe to leave them five points behind fierce rivals Barcelona after only two games of the new season.

Madrid's sluggish start has seen them held 1-1 at home to Valencia in the league followed by a 3-2 defeat by Barcelona in the Spanish Super Cup first leg, before this latest slip-up.

Gonzalo Higuain put Madrid ahead after 26 minutes but their weakness in the air returned to haunt them as Juan Valera headed Getafe level after 52 minutes.

Madrid pressed forward looking for the winner but instead they were caught out at the back, with Abdelaziz Barrada scoring a 74th-minute winner.

Jose Mourinho's side will now look to get their season back on track in the second leg of the Super Cup on Thursday against Barca, who beat Real Sociedad 2-1 earlier on Sunday.

After a scrappy opening at Getafe, Madrid began to assert themselves and Mesut Ozil was guilty of a glaring miss in the 15th minute when he hit the bar after a neat combination with Cristiano Ronaldo left the goal unguarded.

Higuain gave the visitors the lead from Angel di Maria's pass, using his strength to round the goalkeeper and slot the ball home.

After the break, Getafe came out looking to attack and got their reward with the unmarked Valera heading in from a free-kick.

Getafe struck again, with Adrian Colunga going past Raul Albiol and setting up Barrada to score.

Elsewhere, a 44th-minute equaliser from Spain international Alvaro Negredo earned Sevilla a 1-1 draw at Granada, while Valencia were set to host Deportivo La Coruna in Sunday's late match.

Haroon

FROM PAGE 16

the one that took part in the AHC 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 AHC 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.

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

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

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

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

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

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 Suspi-

1 — Alamos

4 Colorado

37 Big-time

Spring

org.

40 Groovy

41 Serve

42 Overly

43 Fearful

44 Shrek, for

45 One

46 High-

47 Incite

48 Thickness

49 Loath-

50 Pruritus

51 — out a

52 Doctor's

53 Due

54 High-

55 Land-

56 Bar

57 Sea

58 Flier

59 Bruce

60 Wayne's

61 Butler

62 A long

63 Time

64 War god

65 Tolerate

66 Military

67 Vehicle

68 Doctor

69 Layer

70 Agile

71 Birthright

72 Barterer

73 Bruce

74 Wayne's

75 Butler

76 Disin-