

Expected draw at Gabba

Cricket

AFP, Brisbane

South Africa staved off Australia's push for an unlikely victory to bat out for a draw in the first Gabba Test on Tuesday, though the home team could take heart from having the better of the encounter.

The top-ranked South Africans lost five wickets and effectively were six down with injured JP Duminy unable to bat, but the Australians frustrated by calls going against them could not make further inroads.

At the close after trailing by 115 runs on the first innings, South Africa were 166 for five with AB de Villiers not out 29 and Vernon Philander not out one.

The draw ensured that Australia retained their unbeaten record at the Brisbane ground which stretches back to the West Indies' victory in 1988.

The teams head to Adelaide for next week's second match of the three-Test series all square, but with Australia shading the opening match and having the world's best team under pressure on the final day of their showdown.

The Aussies have now not lost in their last eight Tests under Clarke, while

the Proteas, under Graeme Smith, have not lost an away Test match since India at Calcutta in February, 2010.

Clarke was named man-of-the-match for his third double-century of the year, his unbeaten 259 which turned the match away from the Proteas over the closing two days.

South Africa lost Alviro Petersen (5), Smith (23) and Hashim Amla (38) before tea, but Jacques Kallis and de Villiers restored stability and held up the Australian assault.

Kallis was out one short of his half-century when Clarke took a splendid one-handed catch at slip off spinner Nathan Lyon in the 49th over.

Jacques Rudolph survived a vociferous lbw appeal off Siddle before he had scored but umpire Billy Bowden was unmoved amid the excited Australian fielders, but he ultimately went lbw to Lyon for 11 heading into the final hour.

Clarke eclipsed Australia earlier declared their first innings at 565 for five with a lead of 115 in the hope of grabbing early wickets to force an improbable victory on a bat-friendly pitch.

Petersen fell before lunch and tempers boiled over as Australia's bowlers sought a big breakthrough in the middle session before Smith went after a fiery over from

James Pattinson.

The young firebrand worked over the Proteas skipper before getting a thick edge to Rob Quiney in the gully as he attempted to drive outside off-stump.

Amla survived a second review on 20 after Pattinson appealed for a catch behind and Peter Siddle thought he had his wicket on 28.

But the Australians were unable to seek a review because they had run out of referrals and umpire Asad Rauf had words with a fired-up Siddle after a short sharp exchange with Amla.

Spinner Lyon proved expensive early, going for 26 runs off his two overs before he was removed from the attack.

But Siddle finally got Amla's wicket when he hit firmly to Michael Hussey in the covers for 38, leaving his team 102 for three.

Clarke declared Australia's innings when he was unbeaten on 259 with wicketkeeper Matthew Wade 19 notout.

Clarke eclipsed England's Alastair Cook's 235 not out two years ago as the highest individual score at the Gabba. Don Bradman hit 226 at the ground in 1931.

Australia went after quick runs before the declaration. Hussey had a nervy spell before clinching his 17th Test century and was out for

100 on the next ball he faced from Morne Morkel.

SCOREBOARD

SOUTH AFRICA: First innings 450 (Kallis 147, Amla 104; Pattinson 3-93)

AUSTRALIA: First innings (overnight 487 for 4)

Cowan run out (Steyn) 136

Warner c Kallis b Steyn 4

Quiney c Steyn b Morkel 9

Ponting c Kallis b Morkel 0

Clarke not out 259

Hussey c Du Plessis (sub) b Morkel 100

Wade not out 19

Extras: (lb-14, w-1, nb-23) 38

Total: (For 5 wkt decd in 138 overs) 565

Did not bat: Lyon, Siddle, Pattinson, Hilfenhaus

Fall of wickets: 1-13, 2-30, 3-40, 4-299, 5-27

Bowler O M R W

Steyn 30 3 129 1

Philander 30 3 103 0

Morkel 31 6 127 3

Kleinewelt 21 1 97 0

Kallis 12 3 30 0

Smith 9 0 36 0

Amla 2 0 9 0

Petersen 3 0 20 0

SOUTH AFRICA: Second innings

Petersen c Wade b Pattinson 5

Smith c Quiney b Pattinson 23

Amla c Hussey b Siddle 38

Kallis c Clarke b Lyon 49

De Villiers not out 29

Rudolph lbw b Lyon 11

Philander not out 1

Extras: (b-2, w-4, nb-4) 10

Total: (For 5 wkt decd in 68 overs) 166

Did not bat: Duminy, Morkel, Steyn, Kleinewelt

Fall of wicket: 1-6, 2-55, 3-102, 4-129, 5-165

Bowler O M R W

Hilfenhaus 15 3 26 0

Pattinson 19 3 58 2

Siddle 17 4 36 1

Lyon 13 5 41 2

Broad likely to be fit, Finn not

REUTERS, Ahmedabad

England's Steven Finn is likely to miss the first cricket Test against India after skipping Tuesday's practice but pace colleague Stuart Broad appeared to be fit for the match starting on Thursday.

Finn, 23, limped off the field on the opening day of England's first warm-up match with a right thigh strain while vice-captain Broad suffered a bruised left heel during the second practice game.

Broad, however, bowled at full steam on Tuesday and is expected to open the bowling with James Anderson when the first of four Tests begins at the Motera Stadium.

The Executive Committee of National Shooting Federation, Bangladesh has been elected unopposed after vice president and member candidates Alauddin Chowdhury and Wazed Islam respectively withdrew their nominations from the elections yesterday.

In the 25-member committee, Alauddin and Wazed submitted their independent nominations outside a panel led by general secretary candidate Intikhabul Hamid Apu, a former skeet shooter. The committee now comprises one president, four vice presidents, general secretary, two joint secretaries, one treasurer and 17 members.

The Moments

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his not-so-surprising short deliveries were dispatched to the fences for the rest of the day.

Early celebrations

With his score on 95, Shivarne Chanderpaul hit a boundary and began celebrating his 'hundred'. He removed his gloves, bent down, kissed his bat to the dressing room. It was only after the traditional celebratory gestures did the batsman receive a signal from his team regarding the one run that he still needed! He eventually got to the three-figure mark on the very next ball and was all smiles.

The opener was also of the opinion that the West Indian spinners would enjoy bowling on the wicket in the later sessions of the Test match.

Decent crowd

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thought since I had nothing better to do I might as well come and watch the match. I thought the morning session was brilliant. There were boundaries and wickets at the same time," said Farid Ahmed, a resident of the area.

While the above-mentioned people represented the crowd from the galleries, there were also a number of people who were die-hard fans of Test cricket. Nurul Kabir, a 48-year-old businessman who was seated at the Shaheed Mushtaque stand, claimed that he preferred watching the longer version of the game to one-dayers. "I grew up watching the likes of Wasim Akram swing the ball in the longer version of the game. The one day game isn't as exciting to me," said Kabir, adding that he was glad that Bangladesh returned to the Test arena.

Solution time: 25 mins.

M	A	C	S	S	W	E	L	S	E	
A	L	A	E	L	I	A	O	S		
M	A	K	D	O	W	N	G	N	U	S
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50 — Speed-wagon



SECOND YEAR AT THE TOP: World number one Novak Djokovic of Serbia raises the trophy after beating Switzerland's Roger Federer in the final of the ATP World Tour Finals at the O2 Arena in London on Monday.

PHOTO: AFP

Novak fends off Roger

Tennis

AFP, London

Novak Djokovic produced a masterful display to end Roger Federer's reign as ATP Tour Finals champion as the world number one swept to a 7-6 (8/6), 7-5 victory in the final on Monday.

Djokovic underlined why he will finish as the world's top ranked player for the second successive year as the Serb withstood an early barrage from Federer in both sets before overwhelming the six-time Tour Finals winner in an epic encounter lasting two hours and 14 minutes at London's O2 Arena.

The 25-year-old's brilliant display clinched his second triumph at the prestigious season-ending event and his first since 2008 when he won the title in Shanghai.

After winning the Australian Open in January and then falling short in the

following three Grand Slams -- he lost in the finals of the French and US Opens -- this was the perfect way to end any debate about Djokovic's right to be regarded as the world's best.

"It's always a privilege and a challenge to play Roger," Djokovic said. "I want to thank my team, I couldn't have done it without you. I love you!"

For Federer, bidding for a hat-trick of Tour Finals titles, there was only frustration as he failed to take advantage of some dominant spells.

The 17-time Grand Slam champion is the most successful player in the history of the event, having won more titles and recorded more match wins than anyone else.

But even he couldn't subdue the rampant Djokovic, who handed Federer just his second defeat in eight appearances in the final of the Tour Finals and only his third ever loss at the O2 Arena.

Abahani off to a flyer

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more time to become the team he wants. The coach also admitted that there were some problems in defence line and finishing.

From the outset, Abahani pressed hard for the lead and it took them 41 minutes to break the deadlock when Frank headed home an Ibrahim cross from close range. The lead was doubled four minutes later. Attacking midfielder Ibrahim, who has been playing for the Sky Blues for seven successive seasons, again turned the provider as his cross was headed by Towhid past Feni's hapless Masud Ahmed Uzzal.

Towhid scored his second to make it 3-0 two minutes later with a spectacular volley. The initial ball was played by Abdul Baten Komol and Towhid, who was recently dropped from the national U-23 squad, raced to the danger zone before volleying at the far post over advancing goalkeeper Uzzal.

"After being dropped from the national squad, I was determined to show good

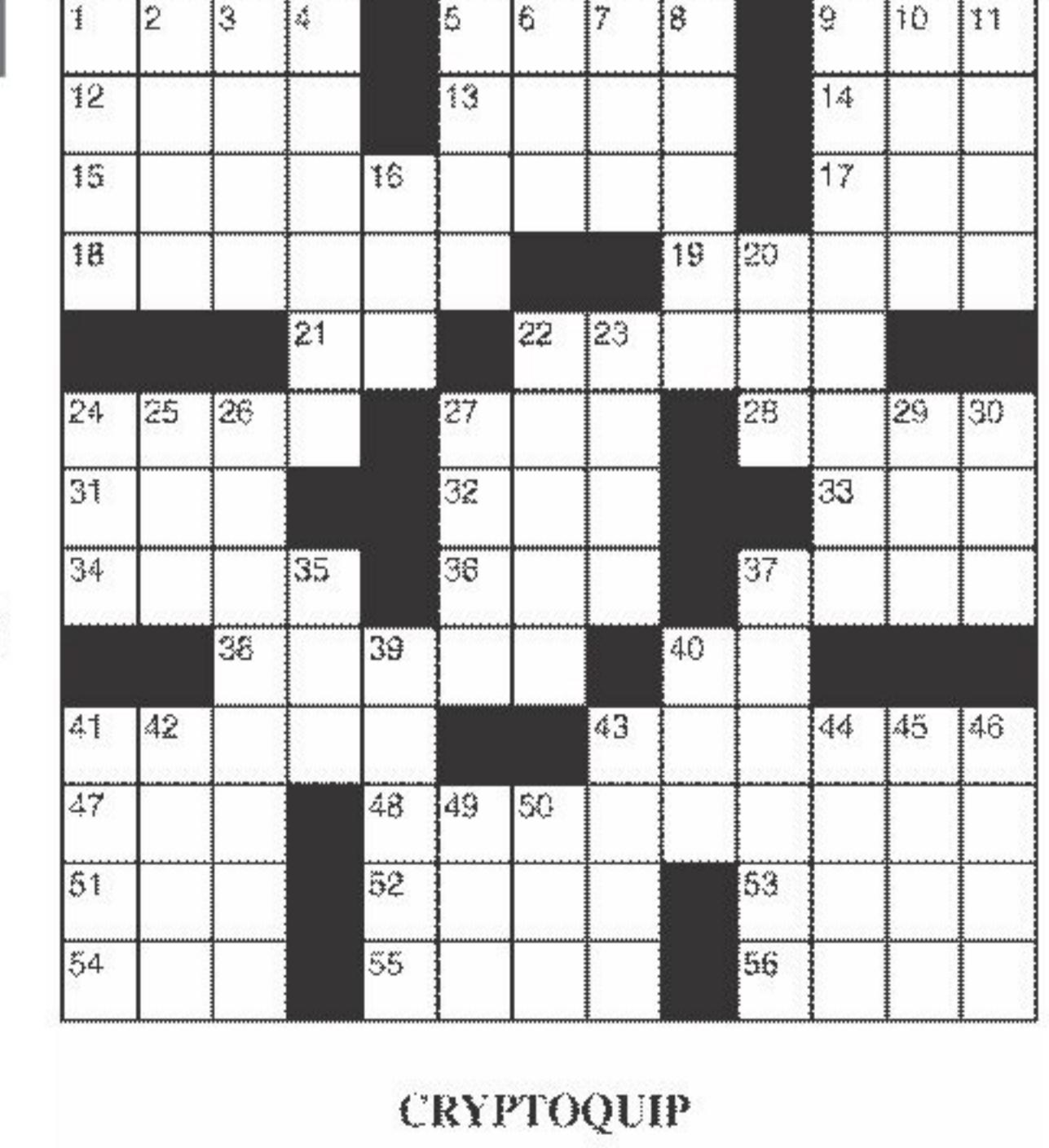
performances and I hope I can carry it to the end of the league," said Towhid, who was replaced by Enamul Haque in the 81st minute.

The second half was a one-sided as Abahani yielded numerous scoring opportunities but failed to capitalise on any of them, thanks to some brilliant saves from substitute goalkeeper Al Amin and failure of Abahani strikers.

Feni Soccer created two good chances to reduce the margin but Nigerian recruit Victory Antoni squandered both chances, even after beating Abahani goalkeeper Shahid Alam Shohel.

Feni Soccer coach Mahmudul Haque Liton admitted that his side failed to give in a good account of themselves while Abahani's foreign players made the difference.

He however claimed that referee Mizanur Rahman was wrong not to award them a penalty and also should have booked Towhid a second time.



CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

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ACROSS

37 Zoo structure