



Australia fast bowler Mitchell Johnson (C) is being congratulated by teammates after he dismissed Angelo Mathews of Sri Lanka on the third day of the second Test at the Melbourne Cricket Ground on Friday.

PHOTO: AFP

Aussies abase Lanka

Cricket

AFP, Melbourne

Australia humiliated an ailing Sri Lanka by an innings and 201 runs to wrap up the series midway through the third day of the second Test in Melbourne on Friday.

Trailing by 304 runs on the first innings, a battered Sri Lanka surrendered for 103 for seven off 24.2 overs with Kumar Sangakkara retiring hurt and out for the rest of the tour.

Prasanna Jayawardene and Chanaka Welegedara were also unable to bat because of injuries.

Australia's rampaging paceman Mitchell Johnson dominated the Test with six wickets and an unbeaten 92. He was a standout player-of-the-match.

"The boys went pretty hard at their batters with the short ball and they didn't like it," Johnson said.

"The plan through this Test match was to get up their batters and unfortunately for them they got a few injuries out of it -- I think that intimidation factor definitely worked out there today."

It ranks as one of Sri Lanka's biggest Test drubbings, only inferior to their innings defeats to South Africa in Cape Town (2001) and Colombo (1993).

Sri Lanka somehow have to regroup physically and mentally for the third and final dead rubber Test starting in Sydney next Thursday.

Their remote hopes of saving the series in Melbourne went out the door when key batsman Sangakkara retired on 27 after he was struck on the glove by a menacing lifter from Johnson.

He was the second Sri Lankan player to suffer a hand injury in the Boxing Day Test with wicketkeeper Prasanna Jayawardene receiving a hairline thumb fracture when also struck by a Johnson delivery in the first innings.

With paceman Welegedara already ruled out of further involvement in the Melbourne Test with a hamstring injury, the Sri Lankan second innings ended at seven wickets down to complete a wretched Test for the tourists.

"We were very disappointed with the way we performed. We need to sit down

and discuss about how we go about things for the rest of the series," skipper Jayawardene said.

"The injuries are something we can't control, but we need to show more character, we need to see something more from the players, we need to come up better and all of us have to take some responsibility."

Confronted by a 304-run innings deficit after the Australians were dismissed for 460, Sri Lanka effectively hoisted the white flag with the loss of four quick wickets.

Sangakkara, one of two 10,000-Test run-getters along with Mahela Jayawardene in the Sri Lankan lineup, was the last hope along with vice-captain Angelo Mathews at lunch.

But it all unravelled in the middle session with Sangakkara's unfortunate demise and Mathews chopping the firebreathing Johnson on to his stumps for 35.

The tourists had a dreadful start with four wickets tumbling in the first six overs, including out-of-form Mahela Jayawardene for a duck.

Opener Dimuth Karunaratne hesitated going for a second run off the third ball of the innings and David Warner pounced, with Johnson knocking down the stumps at the bowler's end and the Sri Lankan opener well short of his ground.

Experienced opener Tillakaratne Dilshan went next ball, spooning a rising Johnson delivery off his hip to Cowan at bat-pad for a duck leaving Sri Lanka at two for one.

Mahela Jayawardene, who has struggled for runs away from home in the last three years, lasted just six balls before edging Jackson Bird on to his stumps in the second over of the innings.

Jayawardene, one of only 11 players to score 10,000 runs in Test cricket, has now gone 26 innings in away Tests without making a half-century.

Thilan Samaraweera was next out leg-before wicket to Bird for one as the tourists lurched to 13 for four in the sixth over.

Earlier, Australia lasted just 5.4 overs into the third day before their first innings ended.

Johnson was stranded eight runs short of his second Test century off 150 balls.

SCOREBOARD

SRI LANKA: First innings 156 (Sangakkara 58; Johnson 4-63)

AUSTRALIA: First innings (overnight 440-8)

Cowan c M Jayawardene b Prasad 36

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