

The latest epitaph



Mark Wood (C) treats his teammates with a Gangnam-style dance as England celebrate their innings and 78-run win over a sorry Australia on the third morning of the fourth Test at Trent Bridge in Nottingham yesterday. With this win England also retained the Ashes, taking an unassailable 3-1 lead in the five-match series.

PHOTO: AFP

England regain the Ashes

AFP, Nottingham

Durham paceman Mark Wood and Ben Stokes set the seal on a crushing innings and 78-run victory over Australia in the fourth Test at Trent Bridge on Saturday as England regained the Ashes in style.

Australia started the day on 241 for seven, 90 runs shy of making England bat again.

But they lost their last three wickets in just 40 minutes' play, with all-rounder Stokes, who'd taken five wickets on Friday, striking again on his way to Test-best figures of six for 36.

Fast bowler Wood ended the match when he had Nathan Lyon playing on as the number eleven tried to withdraw his bat.

Victory gave Alastair Cook's men an unbeatable 3-1 lead in the five-match series as, for the second match in a row, they defeated arch-rivals

Australia inside three days following their eight-wicket win in the third Test at Edgbaston last week.

It was also the first time this year that England, whitewashed 5-0 in Australia in 2013/14, had won back-to-back Tests.

Australia were in trouble right from the start of this match as they collapsed to 60 all out in 111 balls - the shortest completed first innings in Test history -- on Thursday's first day.

Man-of-the-match Stuart Broad, who took two wickets in the first over of the match, including his 300th at this level, finished with a Test-best return of eight for 15.

"I didn't think we were quite ready to win the Ashes at the beginning," said England captain Cook at the presentation ceremony. "I thought you needed a group of players who were match-hardened."

"We have won really critical moments and the players have really stepped up which shouldn't surprise

me but it has," added Cook.

"For what we've been through over the last 18 months, to play like we did has been fantastic. I'm so proud of this young team."

Australian Trevor Bayliss, who took over as England coach shortly before this series, has been widely praised for his role.

But Cook acknowledged the role of Bayliss's sacked predecessor, Peter Moores, by saying: "A lot has happened behind the scenes, and we need to thank Peter Moores -- we did make some strides under Moores. This is for you, Peter."

This win was particularly impressive as England were without James Anderson after their all-time leading wicket-taker suffered a side injury at Edgbaston.

England, in reply to Australia's meagre first innings, made 391 for nine declared, Joe Root top-scoring with 130, on Friday.

Australia captain Michael Clarke said: "Our goal was to come here and try and have some success.

"Alastair Cook and the England team deserve a lot of credit -- they've shown us how to execute good swing and seam bowling," added Clarke, on the losing side for a fourth successive Ashes series in England.

"It's not for want of trying but the boys have been beaten by a better side."

"England when they've had momentum have grabbed it with both hands and ran with it."

SCORES IN BRIEF

AUSTRALIA: First innings 60
ENGLAND: First innings 391 for 9 declared

AUSTRALIA: Second innings 253 (Rogers 52, Warner 64, Voges 51 not out, extras 40; Broad 1-36, Wood 3-69, Stokes 6-36)

Result: England won by an innings and 78 runs to take 3-1 winning lead in the 5-Test series.

Play-of-the-match: Stuart Broad.
Fifth & final Test: August 20-24, The Oval.

'No cricket now'

SPORTS REPORTER

Ace all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan said that he was going to spend the next two weeks as far away from the game of cricket as possible.

Members of the national cricket team are currently on leave till August 20. This is the longest break that they have received this year so far and the ace all-rounder wants to make the most of it.

"I am not in a cricketing mood at all. I am now officially in a businessman's mood," joked Shakib during the official opening ceremony of his restaurant 'Shakib's' in Banani yesterday.

"Right now I am thinking about my holidays. This is the time when we should all relax because we have had such a good time and we should enjoy that success. When we come back and get into the groove of the game, that's when I can talk about the upcoming series," he added.

The slow left-arter is leaving for the United States tomorrow and will spend two weeks there.

"I am going to America for two weeks to sleep. Hopefully I will be able to sleep well. I obviously have a few travelling and shopping plans there. In all, my plan is to stay as far from cricket as possible.

"I might play some football if I get the time and if I get the place, but won't stay near cricket," said a gleeful Shakib.

"We have got this gap after a long time. The holidays are what we are all focused on. Until then I don't think anyone of us will even watch cricket on television," the left-arter added.

Shakib, who attended the press conference with his wife Umme Ahmed Shishir, also announced that the couple were eagerly waiting to become parents later this year.

"Please pray for us. [The child] is due in November. Our fingers are crossed, InshAllah everything will go fine," said Shakib, adding that they had already decided on a name.

Speaking to reporters, Shishir said that Shakib's business stint will be as successful as his cricketing career. "He will do very well. He is an all-rounder," said Shishir.



A BUSINESSMAN IN THE MAKING: Cricket all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan and his wife Umme Ahmed Shishir speak to the media during the official opening ceremony of his restaurant in Banani yesterday.

PHOTO: NAIMUL KARIM

'Playing like this is the new test'

SPORTS REPORTER

The year 2015 can probably go down as one of the greatest years of Bangladesh's cricket; even the sternest of critics would agree to that. However, according to top-order batsman Mahmudullah Riyad, who surprised the world with his two centuries

in the World Cup earlier this year, the Tigers now have a new challenge in store.

"2015 has been one of the best years in terms of cricket for us. But now we have a new challenge ahead of us. We have to hold on to this form and continue performing. That's what we have to do in the future," Riyad told reporters yesterday.

While the player had a brilliant run in the World Cup this year, his performance dipped during the series that ensued. In addition, he had injured his finger which led to him missing the India series.

"Personally, I want to do well in every match that I play. My target is to play consistent cricket," said Riyad.

The next challenge in store for the Tigers is a two-Test series against Australia which begins in October. The Australians might be in dire straits at the moment having been thumped by an innings in the fourth Test of the Ashes series. Their former captain Ricky Ponting during an interview has even gone on to say that there might be as many as eight players on the current side who won't play Tests in the near future. Riyad though, was unmoved by that statement.

"It doesn't matter which Australian team comes. We have the ability to compete against them," said Riyad.

The Tigers have nothing on their international calendar after the end of the Australia series. There is however a chance for the third edition of the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) to take place in November this year. The batsman said that hosting the tournament would do a lot of good for Bangladesh's players.

"The T20 World Cup is around next year and if we can host the BPL at this time, it will be good practice for us," said Riyad.

'Most of the team not good'

AGENCIES, Nottingham

Former Australian captain Ricky Ponting believes half of the touring Ashes squad "might not play" Test cricket again following the embarrassing outing against old foes England at the Trent Bridge.

"There could be up to eight guys who might not ever play Test cricket again in this touring squad. That's a big number... half the squad," Ponting was quoted as saying.

The legendary Australian batsman said the team was just not up to the task.

"You've got to break it down and look at the deficiencies. The cold, hard facts are there. If we got bowled out for 60 then England batted on the same pitch and declared for 391 it is indicative that, one, we didn't bat well, and two, we probably didn't bowl well either.

"Now, here we are again at 7-241, which actually should be the best batting conditions for the whole game," Ponting said after the end of day two.

"They just haven't been good enough. I don't care what they want to say or who they want to blame"

However, Ponting praised Australia openers Chris Rogers and David Warner for stitching a century partnership in the second innings.

Clarke hanging it up after the Ashes

AFP, Nottingham

Australia captain Michael Clarke said Saturday he "hadn't led from the front" as he announced after yesterday's match that he would retire from international cricket after this month's fifth Ashes Test against England at The Oval.

"I will have one more Test and that is the end of my career," said Clarke during the post-match presentation ceremony.

"I am retiring from international cricket. I don't want to jump ship now so I will have one more go at The Oval," he added.

The fifth Test starts at The Oval, in south London, on August 20.

Clarke, one of the best batsmen of his generation but plagued by a longstanding back problem, is in a desperate run of form.

"There's no doubt I'll always hold myself accountable, my performances haven't been anywhere they need to be," said Clarke.

"I don't blame anyone in the changing room, but I haven't led from the front. I started this great game at six years of age and I think it's the right time to walk away now.

"When I first came into the team I had 11 older brothers helping me get into a position where I can help the team and hopefully I've done that."

Clarke has made 28 Test centuries, one short of Donald Bradman's tally, in his 114-match career.

Clarke's Test career began in style when he made a hundred on his debut against India in Bangalore in 2004.

"When Michael made his stunning Test debut in Bangalore back in 2004, Australian cricket knew it had found a very special talent," said Cricket Australia chairman Wally Edwards in a statement.

"He leaves the game as one of our all-time greats... We wish Michael well for his final Test match and thank him for



Hundreds of fans greeted Bangladesh's pace prodigy Mustafizur Rahman at the Jessore airport yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

