



Australia pacer Josh Hazlewood dealt the crucial blow to England's hopes on the final day of the second Ashes Test, sending Joe Root back with just his 11th delivery of the day on Wednesday.

PHOTO: AFP

Hazlewood, Starc rout England

AGENCIES, Adelaide

An inspired and express Josh Hazlewood led the way for Australia as England were ruthlessly dispatched on the fifth afternoon of the day-night Test to give Steve Smith's men a 2-0 lead in the Ashes series.

The second Test had been in the balance when play resumed at Adelaide Oval on Wednesday, with England captain Joe Root still in the middle and his side having six wickets up its sleeve with 178 further runs required to complete a record-breaking run chase of 354.

However, the tourists could score only 57 more runs before being quickly finished off for 233 and Australia sealing a 120-run victory.

Root had not added to his overnight score of 67 when he nicked the fired-up paceman, who was bending his back and bowling at

upwards of 148kmh, to wicketkeeper Tim Paine.

That key breakthrough arrived nine balls after Hazlewood dismissed nightwatchman Chris Woakes for five only a minute after play had resumed. While Hazlewood provided the all-important wickets on the fifth afternoon, as important was Mitchell Starc's five for 88 as the left-arm speedster provided inroads on the fourth evening and wrapped up the tail after Hazlewood opened the door.

"I didn't think it could happen that quickly," Hazlewood said. "It's pretty special. [Root] is obviously a class player and probably the key to their batting."

With the win, a repeat of the Ashes whitewash in 2013-14 ago remains on the cards heading into the third Test at the WACA, but Joe Root is adamant his team's tour is not heading in the same shambolic direction as four years ago.

"I think we're playing better cricket this time around. I don't think we're

as unevenly matched as maybe we were last time around," Root began.

"Throughout the two games it has ebbed and flowed and you've seen us in control for periods of the game, whereas I don't think that was the case last time around. So I think it's just important we try to harness those periods and just expand them and make them last for longer."

His Australian counterpart Steve Smith admitted he had to take a sleeping tablet on the night before the final day in order to get some sleep.

"I had to have a sleeping pill last night," Smith said after the match. "It has been a tough 24 hours if I'm being honest. It's all part of being captain of your country. You have to make difficult decisions. Sometimes you're going to make the wrong decision. It's all part of the learning experience and hopefully I can learn something from this game."

Smith said he could "breathe more easy" after Hazlewood knocked over Root with his 11th

ball of the afternoon's play. The result was emphatic but there had been second thoughts about his heavily scrutinised decision to bat again rather than send England back in under lights with a lead of 215 -- a crucial advantage provided by player-of-the-match Shaun Marsh's first innings score of 126.

"I would say that over the last day or so I have had a few different thoughts and I've read a lot of things. But in the end we've won the game so it's all irrelevant," Smith said.

SCORES IN BRIEF

AUSTRALIA: First innings 442 for 8 decl.

ENGLAND: First innings 227

AUSTRALIA: Second innings 138 (Khawaja 20, Marsh 19; Anderson 5-43, Woakes 4-36)

ENGLAND: Second innings 233 (Root 67, Bairstow 36; Starc 5-88, Hazlewood 2-49, Lyon 2-45)

Result: Australia won by 120 runs and lead the 5-match series 2-0. **Player-of-the-match:** Shaun Marsh.

What to WATCH

TEN 2
Europa League
Apollon v Everton
Live from 12:00am (Friday)
Arsenal v BATE
Live from 2:00am (Friday)

TEN 3
Europa League
Atalanta v Lyon
Live from 12:00am (Friday)
Sociedad v Zenit
Live from 2:00am (Friday)

SONY ESPN
Europa League
Zlin v Lokomotiv
Live from 12:00am (Friday)
Zulte v Lazio
Live from 2:00am (Friday)

DAY'S EVENT

Bangladesh Premier League
Muktijoddha v Saif SC
Time: 4:30pm

Brothers v Arambagh
Time: 6:45pm
Venue: BNS

Bayern get revenge

AFP, Munich



Corentin Tolisso struck twice as Bayern Munich avenged September's defeat at Paris Saint-Germain with a 3-1 victory in Bavaria on Tuesday, but the French side finished top of Group B.

With both teams already through, Bayern needed to win by four goals to usurp PSG having lost 3-0 at the Parc des Princes.

Bayern raced into a 2-0 half-time lead thanks to goals by Robert Lewandowski and Tolisso and although Kylian Mbappe calmed the visitors' nerves just after the break, Tolisso scored a superb third for Bayern.

The result means the Parisians finish as group winners with a better goal difference across the two head-to-head matches, while the Germans restored pride.

"The key to our success was the attitude of the whole team," said Bayern head coach Jupp Heynckes. "Tactically, we weren't just clever in the way we played, but also street-smart. Overall, we played a very good game and implemented what we set out to do."

PSG's Germany midfielder Julian Draxler admitted the home side were the better team on the night.

"Bayern did well, you can see that they are

still up there amongst the best teams," said Draxler. "We have work to do because we need to play better in this type of match."

"We played too much as individuals and not enough as a team," the defensive midfielder continued. "When we played as a team, we were dangerous and could have scored more goals but weren't clinical enough."

"When we try to do everything on our own, it doesn't work."

WE DON'T FEAR ANYONE: CONTE

Antonio Conte insists Chelsea have nothing to fear in the Champions League last 16 even though his side could face a crunch clash with Barcelona or Paris Saint Germain after a 1-1 draw with Atletico Madrid saw them finish second behind AS Roma in their group.

Turkish side Besiktas or Sevilla, if they win their group, are other possible opponents.

"When you play this competition and you go through to the next round you must be ready to face the best teams," he said. "In this case we know we could play Barcelona, Paris Saint Germain or Besiktas."

"We must be ready. At the same time I think our opponent won't be happy to play against us. It is a fantastic competition. We reached the next round and we must be happy with this."



Bayern Munich's summer signing, midfielder Corentin Tolisso, netted twice as the Bavarians avenged their defeat to Paris Saint Germain on Tuesday.

PHOTO: AFP

QUICK SINGLES

The following are a few samples of stories that did not make the print edition. However, if they pique your interest, you can always read them online on The Daily Star website by simply scanning the QR codes listed below:

Pogba puts faith in Man Utd teammates

Paul Pogba said he has "complete trust" in his Manchester United teammates as they prepare to take on Premier League leaders Manchester City without the suspended French international.



Neuer warned not to rush back

Ex-Germany captain Oliver Kahn and Lothar Matthaus have warned current skipper Manuel Neuer not to risk his career by rushing back from injury ahead of next year's World Cup.



Razib denies Rakib again

SPORTS REPORTER



Grand Master Enamul Hossain Razib retained the title of the National 'A' Chess Championship after beating fellow GM Abdullah Al Rakib in title-deciding playoffs at the Bangladesh Chess Federation hall room yesterday.

The championship rolled into rapid-fire playoffs after both players ended on top of the table with 11 points each. In the playoffs, Razib won the 25-minute first match while Rakib surrendered during the second match as Razib claimed the national title for the fourth time.



GM Enamul Hossain Razib (L) in action in the play-offs against GM Abdullah Al Rakib.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

"It was a great playoff for both of us because Rakib has always been better than me in rapid-fire format," Razib said after his victory. "But this time I made good start in both games and I capitalised on a silly mistake he made in the second match."

Razib, the youngest GM of the country, won his first national title in 1997, two years after making his debut in top-tier league. He became champion in 2006 and 2016 also.

"After losing the first game, I adopted attacking strategy but a silly mistake cost me and I surrendered," said Rakib, who had to be content with a second-place finish for the second time running after having clinched the title in 2007 and 2013.

Sheikh Jamal waste chance

Mohammedan snap losing streak

SPORTS REPORTER



Sheikh Jamal DC wasted an opportunity to catch Bangladesh Premier League leaders Chittagong Abahani after being held to a 1-1 draw by Rahmatganj MFS at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

With the labourious draw, the three-time champions remained in second place with 34 points from 15 matches, two adrift of Chittagong Abahani while Rahmatganj stayed at ninth position with 13 points.

Following Chittagong Abahani's 2-2 draw on Tuesday, the Dhanmondi giants had the opportunity to go top of the table, but they had to instead dig deep to salvage one point against Rahmatganj.

Gambian forward Solomon King rescued the side by levelling the margin two minutes from time after his compatriot Dawda Ceesay had given Rahmatganj the lead in the first half.

On the back of four straight victories, Sheikh Jamal started the game strongly and put huge pressure on their

opposition. However, it was Rahmatganj who broke the deadlock against the run of play in the 27th minute when Solomon King, availing a missed pass from Khan Mohammad Tara, shrugged off his markers Yeasin Khan and Afzal Hossain to race into the danger zone before driving a low shot past goalkeeper Mitul Hasan.

After that the ball was mostly confined in the midfield as both teams

SHEIKH JAMAL (SOLOMON 88)	1 - 1	RAHMATGANJ (DAWDA 27)
MOHAMMEDAN (WALSON 46, 57)	2 - 0	FARASHGANJ

tried to establish their authority, but none could create any meaningful chances in the rest of first half.

Sheikh Jamal looked better after the break and almost equalised five minutes into the second half, but Rahmatganj MFS goalkeeper Mohammad Razib brilliantly kept out a free-kick from Solomon, who later

levelled the margin from another free-kick two minutes from time.

Meanwhile, Mohammedan SC returned to winning ways after three straight defeats with a 2-0 win over Farashganj SC, thanks to a brace from new-signing Augustine Walson.

The victory helped the Black and Whites climb to fifth position with 20 points from 15 matches while Farashganj remained bottom of the table with seven points.

Having conceded defeats against Abahani, Chittagong Abahani and Sheikh Jamal DC, the falling giants from Motijheel came into the match to stop the losing streak, but they faced stiff challenge from the Old Dhaka outfit before scoring both goals early in the second half.

Walson danced past two Farashganj defenders and deceived the goalkeeper with a strike at the near post in the 51st minute before doubling the lead six minutes later from a spot-kick.

Farashganj, however, were a bit unlucky not to collect a point as they were denied by the woodwork twice.

Two BD clubs in AFC Cup

SPORTS REPORTER



Two clubs from Bangladesh have been confirmed for the upcoming AFC Cup even though the names of the clubs have not been confirmed as the Bangladesh Premier League is yet to be completed.

Though five-time league champions Abahani, who were the lone representatives of the country in the last edition, are all but certain of their second successive berth by dint of their Federation Cup victory this year, the name of the second team will be confirmed after the completion of the league, which is scheduled to end on January 13.

Usually the league champions are given direct entry into the group stages while Federation Cup winners have to qualify for the group stages through playoff qualifiers.

At the moment, Chittagong Abahani are on top of the league table followed by Sheikh Jamal DC, Abahani and Saif SC, but only Abahani, Saif SC and Mohammedan SC are eligible to take part in the AFC Cup as the nine other clubs of the league have failed to meet the criteria for the AFC Cup.

However, Abahani can directly play in the group stages, subject to their league standing while Saif SC and Mohammedan SC must finish among top four in the league table to be eligible for consideration for the playoff qualifiers.

During the AFC Cup draw in Kuala Lumpur yesterday, the top seed from Bangladesh (league champions) were drawn in Group E alongside India's Aizawl FC/Mohun Bagan, New Radiant SC of Maldives and another team from India/Maldives/Bhutan/Bangladesh, who will join through playoff qualifiers.

The playoff qualifiers will be held on January 23 and 30 while the playoff matches will take place on February 13 and 20.

Serena's return at Australian Open?

AFP, Melbourne

Serena Williams will be ready to make her tennis comeback at the Australian Open with her return to Melbourne for the season's opening Grand Slam "very likely", organisers said Wednesday.

Williams, 36, won this year's Australian Open while pregnant and gave birth to a baby girl in September. She has not played a competition since, raising questions over whether the 23-time Grand Slam winner would attempt to defend her title next month.

But tournament director Craig Tiley is optimistic she will return for a crack at her seventh Melbourne Park crown after marrying Reddit co-founder Alexis Ohanian last month.

"She's got her visa, she's entered, she's practising and she's probably just got to find a bit more space for a bigger entourage," Melbourne's Herald Sun quoted him as saying.

"There's no question that she'll be ready in our view and she wants to break a record that is Margaret Court's. It would be a pretty significant accomplishment for her to be able to do that."

Australian Court has 24 major titles, making her the most successful player in Grand Slam history.

Tiley described the event, which will be held from January 15-28, as "family-friendly".

Ronaldo set to equal Messi?

AFP, Paris

Cristiano Ronaldo looks set to match his great rival Lionel Messi on Thursday by claiming a fifth Ballon d'Or as recognition for leading Real Madrid to a La Liga and Champions League double last season.

Barcelona's 30-year-old Argentinian superstar won the coveted award from 2009 to 2012 and in 2015. Portugal's Ronaldo, who is 32, took the honours in 2008, 2013, 2014 and last year.

The man who came to maturity under the watchful eye of ex-Manchester United coach Alex Ferguson clinched his fourth Ballon d'Or after an unforgettable season, first spearheading Real to the Champions League title before also leading his homeland to Euro 2016 glory in Paris.

The France Football magazine award is decided upon by a journalists ballot (with 173 voting in 2016) with each naming a top five from a list of 30.

British bookmakers have stopped taking bets on Ronaldo, who is a cramped 10-1 on favourite to win, with Messi, trophyless last season, at 6-1.



NIKE LEAKS 'WINNING' BOOT

Nike have let the cat out of the bag and it appears that Cristiano Ronaldo is set to win a fifth Ballon d'Or after pictures of two new sets of boots were leaked online ahead of tomorrow's event.

One set of boots, named the Mercurial Superfly V Quinto Triunfo CR7, even reads "fifth triumph" when translated. They have the four years in which Ronaldo has won the Ballon d'Or - 2008, 2013, 2014, 2016 -- as well as 2017, inscribed inside of them.

Behind this pair the bookies round out their own top five with Paris Saint-Germain's gifted Brazilian forward Neymar, the veteran Juventus goal-

keeper Gianluigi Buffon and the prolific England centre-forward Harry Kane all at 33-1.

The 2016-2017 season was in a way just as glorious for Ronaldo, who started the season slowly before Real shaded Barcelona to the domestic title and then became the first side in the modern era to defend their European crown.

After seeing off Napoli, Bayern Munich and Atletico Madrid in the knock-out rounds Ronaldo scored twice in a 4-1 win over Juventus in the final, taking his tally to 12 goals in the competition that season.

"Last season was exceptional. We won the league and the Champions League, where I was again the top scorer," Ronaldo told French daily L'Equipe.

Real have a staggering seven players on the shortlist of 30 with Karim Benzema, Marcelo, Isco, Luka Modric, Sergio Ramos and Toni Kroos all nominated alongside their talisman Ronaldo.

The only other Barca player other than Messi, is the Uruguayan centre-forward Luis Suarez.