



Australia batsman Steven Smith patiently stitched together a 207-ball 142, his second century of the match following his ton in the first innings, to make up for a few early hiccups from the side and provide a commanding lead on the fourth day of the first Ashes Test in Birmingham yesterday. PHOTO: AFP

Dominant Smith sets hosts 398 chase

AFP, Birmingham

Steve Smith hit his second century of his comeback Test on Sunday as Australia set England a daunting 398 to win the Ashes opener at Edgbaston.

Ashes-holders Australia, bidding to win their first Test series away to England in 18 years, made 487-7 declared in their second innings as they capitalised on the absence from the home side's attack of the injured James Anderson.

That left England needing 398 for victory -- the most they have made in the fourth

TWIN TONS IN ASHES TESTS			
PLAYER	SCORES	VENUE	YEAR
STEVE SMITH (AUS)	144 & 142	EDGBASTON	2019
MATTHEW HAYDEN (AUS)	197 & 103	GABBA	2002
STEVE WAUGH (AUS)	108 & 116	OLD TRAFFORD	1997
DENIS COMPTON (ENG)	147 & 103*	ADELAIDE	1947
ARTHUR MORRIS (AUS)	122 & 124*	ADELAIDE	1947
WALLY HAMMOND (ENG)	119* & 177	ADELAIDE	1929
HERBERT SUTCLIFFE (ENG)	176 & 127	MCG	1925
WARREN BARDSELY (AUS)	136 & 130	THE OVAL	1909

innings to win a Test was 332-7 against Australia at Melbourne back in 1928/29.

Australia captain Tim Paine's declaration late on the fourth day left England with an awkward seven overs to bat before stumps.

Rory Burns, fresh from his maiden Test century in the first innings, and Jason Roy saw England to 13-0 at the close.

Smith made 142 following his 144 in the first innings of the match. He is just the fifth Australian to score hundreds in both innings of an Ashes Test.

Matthew Wade marked his first Test for nearly two years with a fine 110.

Smith, having reached lunch on 98 not out, went to three figures in style when he cover-drove England paceman Stuart Broad for his 10th four in 147 balls faced.

He celebrated by removing his batting helmet and waving his bat joyously towards the Australia changing room.

When he goes out to bat, it's almost like he's in a trance-like state. He knows exactly what he's trying to do, exactly what the opposition are trying to do... he analyses every ball and it's like a computer, he spits out the answer.

STEVE WAUGH
Former Australia captain on Steve Smith

And while there was applause from a packed crowd, there were also chants of 'Crying on the telly, we saw you crying on the telly' in a reference to the emotional press conference Smith gave in Sydney after he was sent home from South Africa.

"When he goes out to bat, it's almost like he's in a trance-like state," former Australia captain Waugh told Channel Nine. "He knows exactly what he's trying to do, exactly what the opposition are trying to do... he analyses every ball and it's like a computer, he spits out the answer," added Waugh, now a mentor to the Australia squad.

Smith has now scored 1,116 runs in his past 10 Ashes innings, a figure second only to the 1,236 made over the same span by Australia's Don Bradman.

The new ball, however, did eventually give England the wicket they craved.

Chris Woakes got a delivery to deviate in the air outside off stump, with Smith edging an intended drive to wicketkeeper Jonny Bairstow.

As Smith walked back after a 207-ball innings including 14 fours, the cheers at last drowned out the jeers.

SCORES IN BRIEF
AUSTRALIA: First innings 284
ENGLAND: First innings 374 all out
AUSTRALIA: Second Innings 487 for 7 decl (Smith 142, Head 51, Wade 110; Stokes 3-85)
ENGLAND: Second innings 13 for no loss.

Shakib's Rangpur move not endorsed by BPL GC

Fresh agreements as BPL 7 to kick off new 4-year cycle

SPORTS REPORTER

One cannot expect a new season of the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) to approach without any twists and turns. The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) had already announced that the seventh edition of the franchise-based T20 competition will start on December 6 and disclosures from a few franchises about their new acquisitions for the season had created some buzz among fans.

The BPL governing council (GC) however made it clear during a press conference at Mirpur yesterday that the deals struck by franchises -- like Shakib Al Hasan's high-profile move back to Rangpur Riders -- has not been endorsed by the governing council as the seventh edition of the BPL will be part of a new four-year cycle.

"With the conclusion of the sixth edition, the first cycle of the tournament is now considered complete, which also marks the expiry of the tenure of the franchisee agreements with the respective rights holders. The seventh edition will be part of a new cycle that will require a 'fresh franchisee agreement/contract'. Since we have not yet made a new agreement for the new cycle, we cannot endorse whatever deals have been struck by franchises for the seventh edition," explained BCB director Mahbubul Anam.

Other high-profile moves that would be rendered null and void include Tamim Iqbal's move from sixth edition champions Comilla Victorians to Khulna Titans, who had also announced that they roped in former Australia all-rounder Shane Watson.

BCB media committee chairman Jalal Yunus said that the BPL governing council will send



BCB director Mahbubul Anam briefs the media about the BPL's next four-year cycle, which will begin in December, during a press conference at the BCB headquarters in Mirpur yesterday. PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

out invitations within 48 hours to teams that had participated in the sixth edition for a discussion on the issue of renewal of the franchise agreement and the execution of a fresh contract subject to mutually agreeable terms and conditions.

"Technically speaking, what they [BPL GC] raised is okay," Rangpur Riders CEO Ishtiaque Sadeque told The Star yesterday.

"When we spoke to them after the last season, they assured us that everything would be done as per usual because the [new] agreement was a formality. Interestingly, they sent us an email on May 11 thanking us for our efforts in the last season, informing that a date was fixed for the next [seventh] edition and asking us to 'take necessary preparations' for the next edition. If everything changes to benefit one franchisee, then why would people spend all the money

to participate? As they said they would contact us within 48 hours, let us wait and see what happens."

"We cannot acknowledge anything as we are going to make a fresh start with the new cycle. All the rules and regulations for the second cycle for a further period of four editions (7th, 8th, 9th & 10th) will be determined after the new agreement. Everybody should start afresh. There will be a level playing field for all franchisee," Anam added.

Anam, however, was confident that they would be able to finalise everything within this month as the BCB has already published an advertisement seeking expression of interest (EOI) from interested applicants for franchisee rights of two teams as the previous rights holders of Chittagong Vikings communicated its decision to 'discontinue as a team' and the BCB is also exploring the possibility of adding another new franchise team for the seventh edition.

"The decision to grant franchisee rights to interested applicants to EOI will depend on, amongst others, outcome of the discussion about renewal of franchise agreement and settlement of disputes (if any) with previous right holders to BPL franchise teams," said a BCB press release detailing the major outcomes of the governing council meeting.

According to the press release, 'the 7th edition will see an open draft/auction for listed players (local and overseas) on all categories. Player retention option will come into effect from the BPL T20 8th edition onwards'.

During yesterday's press conference, Anam also added that the BPL governing council was now more matured after the experienced gathered over six editions.

BD women lose third T20

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Emerging Players Women's Cricket team (A Team) lost their third and final T20I match against their South African counterparts in a one-over eliminator at Hammanskraal, South Africa yesterday. Bangladesh had already lost the three-match T20 series following defeats in the first two encounters.

A heroic 73 from Sanjida Islam helped Bangladesh tie the match in their 20 regulation overs after being sent in to chase the host's 147 total with Shaila Rahman taking a double off the last ball of the innings to take the match into the Super Over. The second string Bangladesh side lost the first T20 match by a narrow five-wicket margin while the second was a six-wicket defeat.

During their trip, Bangladesh played a three-match ODI series followed by a three-match T20 series. The Bangladesh team won the one-dayers 2-1.

In the first one-dayer, Bangladesh lost by 47 runs but a four-wicket win in the second ODI and the nine wicket win in the third ODI which followed meant that the young Tigresses came out victorious.

SCORES IN BRIEF
SOUTH AFRICA A: 147 for 3 in 20 overs (De Klerk 83, Brits 35; Fahima 1-26)
BANGLADESH A: 147 for 5 in 20 overs (Sanjida 73, Murshida 26; Sekhukhune 2-19)
Result: Match tied (SA won by Super Over).

Saifuddin to be sent abroad for diagnosis

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) chief physician Debashish Chowdhury yesterday informed that the board are thinking of sending all-rounder Mohammad Saifuddin abroad to gain an understanding of the back problem that has plagued the player for the past nine years.

Saifuddin recently sat out a World Cup game against Australia because of a flare-up of the back pain and also missed the recently concluded ODI tour of Sri Lanka. Debashish said that the all-rounder had been complaining about his issue for a long time and that the BCB, although aware of the nature of the injury, are yet to identify underlying cause.

"Saifuddin is suffering from chronic, lower back pain. He has been complaining of this injury for nine years now. After conducting tests, we found out that he is suffering from a facet joint problem. We have tried rehabilitation, but it did not work, and as a result we gave him injections which enabled him to play. The pain receded following the injections, but it flared up again when playing in Ireland. He was evaluated by sports doctors in England and they arrived at the opinion that there was a facet joint problem and for the second time administered injections. The injections helped reduce his pain for a few days but later, the pain came back again," Debashish said.

The nature of Saifuddin's injury is such that playing more can aggravate his situation. The BCB are looking to identify whether the all-rounder has a biomechanical problem. Since assessment is not possible here, they are looking to send the bowler to a



state-of-the-art facility outside the country.

"At present it is not possible to determine the reason behind his injury here, so we are thinking of sending him outside the country for biomechanical assessment," Debashish informed.

"The BCB CEO already told us to acquire information regarding such facilities. We are hoping that in a week we will know where we could send him," he added.

In other injury developments, ODI captain Mashrafe Bin Mortaza -- who was also ruled out of the Sri Lanka tour -- is currently staying away from activities that could aggravate his hamstring injury.

"Mashrafe has been advised to stay away from cricketing activity for 21 days. He does not have any rehab programme with us but we are trying to guide him so that he stays pain-free," Debashish said, adding that the

skipper is not in pain at the moment.

With players like Saifuddin and Mashrafe suffering recurring injuries, questions were raised about how the management planned to manage injuries. Shakib Al Hasan had previously talked about resting players and bring in a rotation policy, which would allow more players to push for a first-team place.

"We have brought all the players under the workload management programme. There is a scientific procedure for the number of balls a bowler should bowl in a day or a week. Saifuddin is not bowling now and is under strict bowling workload management. Once he is able to bowl, he will follow the rules set by the programme. Every player has these workload programme, which is updated every week. We provide the information to the board, which then chooses who to play," Debashish informed.

'Could not believe it when I got a cap'

Pri, Lauderhill

An impressive India debut under his belt, fast bowler Navdeep Saini said he could not believe himself when he was handed the India cap to play in the first T20 International against the West Indies here.

The 26-year-old Saini starred in India's 4-wicket win by taking three wickets for 17 runs on Saturday. He was adjudged player-of-the-match for his impressive bowling display which saw India restrict West Indies to 95 for 9.

India made a heavy weather of the modest run chase before pulling off a 4-wicket win with 2.4 over to spare.

"When I received the India cap (on Saturday morning), I could not believe



NAVDEEP SAINI

that today is the day which I was waiting for. I am very happy to make the debut for India," Saini told his senior pace colleague Bhuvneshwar Kumar in an interview posted on BCCI Twitter handle.

Saini got two of his three wickets -- that

of Nicholas Puran and Shimron Hetmyer -- in two balls in the fifth over of the West Indies innings. But he could not get a hat-trick as Rovman Powell left alone Saini's next delivery.

Asked what was in his mind while bowling the hat-trick ball, Saini said, "My confidence was low initially as I was having pressure of making the debut. The first wicket released the pressure. Then, when I got the second wicket my confidence increased and I felt like I was playing a normal match."

"When I was to bowl the hat-trick ball, I felt like 'it is something which I have been seeing others do, it is happening to me'. Then, I was focussing on how to take the wicket," said the Haryana-born Saini who plays for Delhi in domestic circuit.

Football-style revamp in CSA

REUTERS, Cape Town

South Africa will radically overhaul their management team, including saying goodbye to coach Ottis Gibson, as they instead move to a football-style new structure.

West Indian Gibson will not have his contract renewed after a disappointing World Cup in England.

Members of (the current) team management, including the various assistant cricket coaches, will not be retained as part of the forthcoming plan," Cricket South Africa (CSA) said in a media release on Sunday.

CSA will instead appoint a team manager, who will select his own coaching staff and captains in the three formats of the game.

The medical staff and administrative staff will also report to him.

The team manager will report to CSA Acting Director of Cricket, Corrie van Zyl, who will in turn report to the Chief Executive.

The structure will be similar to that at top European football clubs where a technical director takes charge of the coaching staff and players.

While CSA advertise the positions of Director of Cricket, team manager and convener of selectors, Van Zyl will appoint an interim management team, selection panel and captain for the three-Tour of India in September and October.

"This change will herald an exciting new era for the SA cricket and will bring us into line with best practice in professional sport," CSA CEO Thabang Moroe said.

"I must stress that the new structure was not a rash decision. It was taken after much deliberation by the Board, taking all the factors into consideration about the current state of our cricket."