

Sports

Lyon roars as Australia crush New Zealand to sweep series

Taylor becomes N Zealand's top Test run scorer

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard on the fourth day of the third Test against New Zealand at the Sydney Cricket Ground yesterday:

Australia 1st innings 454 (M. Labuschagne 215, S. Smith 63; N. Wagner 3-66, C. de Grandhomme 3-78)
New Zealand 1st innings 256* (G. Phillips 52, T. Latham 49; N. Lyon 5-68)
 *Includes five-run penalty from Australia's 2nd innings

Australia 2nd innings (overnight 40-0)

D. Warner not out 111
 J. Burns lbw b Astle 40
 M. Labuschagne c Latham b Henry 59
 Extras (b3, lb3, w1) 7
 Total (2 wkts declared; 52 overs) 217
 Fall of wickets: 1-107 (Burns), 2-217 (Labuschagne)
 Bowling: Henry 12-2-54-1 (1w), de Grandhomme 13-1-43-0, Wagner 9-1-37-0, Somerville 10-0-36-0, Astle 8-1-41-1.

New Zealand 2nd innings

T. Latham lbw b Starc 1
 T. Blundell c Lyon b Starc 2
 J. Raval c Paine b Lyon 12
 R. Taylor b Cummins 22
 G. Phillips c Paine b Lyon 0
 B.J. Watling c Cummins b Lyon 19
 C. de Grandhomme c Burns b Lyon 52
 T. Astle c Pattinson b Lyon 17
 W. Somerville b Starc 7
 N. Wagner not out 0
 M. Henry did not bat (injured) 0
 Extras (b3, lb1) 4
 Total (9 wkts; 47.5 overs) 136
 Fall of wickets: 1-3 (Blundell), 2-4 (Latham), 3-22 (Raval), 4-22 (Phillips), 5-38 (Taylor), 6-107 (de Grandhomme), 7-128 (Astle), 8-136 (Somerville), 9-136 (Watling)
 Bowling: Starc 9-3-25-3, Cummins 11-3-29-1, Pattinson 6-3-8-0, Lyon 16.5-4-50-5, Labuschagne 5-0-20-0.
 Australia won by 279 runs
 Australia win series 3-0
Man of the match: Marnus Labuschagne (AUS)

SYDNEY: Nathan Lyon captured five for 50 and 10 match wickets as Australia crushed New Zealand by 279 runs yesterday, capping a golden domestic summer as they swept the three-Test series. The off-spinner led the powerful Australian bowling attack to dismiss the Kiwis for 136 and seal another heavy win over the Black Caps after similar victories in Perth and Melbourne.

Australia have been unbeatable this season, winning all five Tests at home — two against Pakistan and three against New Zealand — after retaining the Ashes by drawing the series 2-2 in England. "It's been a great summer for the Australian Test side," Lyon said. "It's pretty special to be part of it, we have been impressive, pretty clinical, the batters have done well and given us bowlers plenty of time." Australia declared their second innings at 217 for two with David Warner scoring an unbeaten century, leaving the Black Caps with a revised 416-run target in the fourth innings on a wearing Sydney Cricket Ground pitch.

But the Kiwis buckled under the pressure of Australia's superior bowling attack with Mitchell Starc taking three for 25 to support the wiles of spinner Lyon. "They were clinical in all areas and after the first match they put us under pressure session after session," said skipper Kane Williamson, who missed the Test with a virus. New Zealand were reeling early at 27-4 and never recovered after Starc and Lyon took two wickets each in the middle session to put the skids under the tourists. Starc removed both openers, Tom Latham and Tom Blundell, in the first five overs.

Blundell fell to a stunning catch by a diving Lyon at point for two and stand-in skipper Latham lost a review for leg before wicket. Jeet Raval was out in a review to the faintest of edges on 'Snicko' in Lyon's first over for 12. First-innings top-scorer Glenn Phillips went for a duck after technology detected a faint outside edge to wicket-keeper Paine off Lyon.

Ross Taylor became the leading all-time Kiwi batsman, going past Stephen Fleming (7,172) before he was bowled by Pat Cummins for 22 to take his Test aggregate to 7,174. Big-hitting Colin de Grandhomme smacked Lyon for six to bring up his fifty but went next ball hoick to Joe Burns at deep mid-wicket for 52.



SYDNEY: The Australian team poses with the Trans-Tasman Trophy after winning the series on the fourth day of the third cricket Test match between Australia and New Zealand at the Sydney Cricket Ground in Sydney yesterday. — AFP

Todd Astle was out to a superb diving catch by James Pattinson in the outfield for 17. Starc yorced William Somerville's middle stump for seven and BJ Watling was the last to fall, caught at backward square leg by Pat Cummins for 19. Earlier, Warner completed his 24th Test century and remained unbeaten when skipper Paine declared upon the dismissal of Marnus Labuschagne. "You know you're capable of doing so," Warner said, when asked about how he had bounced back from his disastrous Ashes campaign in England last year.

"I was in the nets hitting the ball well and had the skipper backing me. To be able to play with freedom helped me. It's all paying off." Labuschagne, who was dropped on four in a regulation caught-and-bowled chance by leg-spinner Astle, was caught at long on off

Matt Henry for 59 — his seventh score over 50 in eight innings this domestic summer. Labuschagne finished the home five-Test season with a stunning aggregate of 896 runs, made up of his 215 in the first innings, three other centuries and three half-centuries in eight innings.

There was drama late in the Australian innings when Warner was given an official warning by umpire Aleem Dar for running down the middle of the pitch in scampering a single. It resulted in five penalty runs being added to New Zealand's first innings total meaning their target was revised down from 421 to 416.

The Test was played against the backdrop of one of Australia's most devastating bushfire seasons with at least 24 people losing their lives in blazes raging across the country, including on the outskirts of Sydney. — AFP

South Africa defiant after Stokes show

CAPE TOWN: Ben Stokes launched an astonishing assault which enabled England to give themselves plenty of time to push for victory, but the tourists had to work hard to take two South African wickets before the close on the fourth day of the second Test at Newlands yesterday.

Set to make a world record 438 to win, South Africa were 126 for two at the close. They used up 56 overs yesterday but will need to bat out another 90 on Tuesday to prevent England from levelling the four-match series.

Opening batsman Pieter Malan, making his Test debut, scored 63 not out and shared half-century partnerships with Dean Elgar (34) and Zubayr Hamza, who was caught behind off James Anderson in the penultimate over of the day for 18. Stokes slammed 72 off 47 balls to overshadow a maiden Test century by Dominic Sibley, who continued his sedate progress as he took his overnight score of 85 to 133 not out. He reached his hundred off 269 balls and faced 311 deliveries in his innings.

England's batting on Monday was in dramatic contrast to their effort on Sunday when they ground their way to 218 for four off 79 overs. Sparked by Stokes they added another 157 runs off only 32 overs before declaring five overs after lunch on 391 for eight.

While Sibley continued to play the anchor role, Stokes went on the attack against every bowler he faced. He survived a chance on 38 when an attempted pull against Kagiso Rabada could not be held by a diving Quinton de Kock after the wicketkeeper ran about 35 metres in trying to take the catch.

Stokes was caught at long-on off left-arm spinner Keshav Maharaj after an innings which included three sixes and seven fours and had a large English contingent in the crowd roaring their approval.

Ollie Pope fell quickly but Jos Buttler continued the attack, hitting 23 off 18 balls as the lead went beyond 400.

South African captain Faf du Plessis chose not to take the second new ball when it was due after a maiden over by Dwaine Pretorius at the start of play. He perhaps reasoned that Maharaj had a chance of dismissing Stokes early in his innings.

The tactic backfired, however, as 28 runs were added in five overs before the new ball was taken, including sixes by Stokes off Pretorius and Maharaj.

Malan, out for five in the first innings, survived a review for leg before wicket against Stuart Broad when he was on four but then batted with patience to notch a patient maid-

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at the close of play on the fourth day of the second Test between South Africa and England at Newlands yesterday:

England, first innings, 269
South Africa, first innings, 223
England, second innings (overnight 218-4)
 Z. Crawley c De Kock b Rabada 25
 D. Sibley not out 133
 J. Denly c Pretorius b Nortje 31
 J. Root c Du Plessis b Pretorius 61
 D. Bess c De Kock b Nortje 0
 B. Stokes c Van der Dussen b Maharaj 72
 O. Pope b Rabada 3
 J. Buttler c De Kock b Nortje 23
 S. Curran c Hamza b Maharaj 13
 S. Broad not out 8
 Extras (b18, lb3, w1) 22
 Total (8 wkts dec, 111 overs) 391
 Fall of wickets: 1-28 (Crawley), 2-101 (Denly), 3-217 (Root), 4-218 (Bess), 5-310 (Stokes), 6-315 (Pope), 7-356 (Buttler), 8-375

(Curran)
 Bowling: Rabada 20-3-69-2, Philander 14-7-24-0, Nortje 18-2-61-3 (1w), Pretorius 16-4-56-1, Maharaj 43-9-160-2.

South Africa, second innings

P. Malan not out 63
 D. Elgar c Buttler b Denly 34
 Z. Hamza c Buttler b Anderson 18
 K. Maharaj not out 2
 Extras (b4, lb1, nb3, w1) 9
 Total (2 wkts, 56 overs) 126
 Fall of wicket: 1-71 (Elgar), 2-123 (Hamza)
 Bowling: Anderson 9-4-18-1, Broad 9-2-20-0, Bess 12-3-29-0, Curran 8-2-13-0 (1w), Denly 8-0-26-1, Root 3-0-7-0, Stokes 7-3-8-0 (2nb)
 Match situation: South Africa need 312 runs to win with eight wickets remaining.



CAPE TOWN: South Africa's Pieter Malan (2ndL) prepares to play a shot during the fourth day of the second Test cricket match between South Africa and England at the Newlands stadium in Cape Town yesterday. — AFP

en Test fifty off 144 balls which included only two fours. England's first success was a first Test wicket for Joe Denly, who troubled the left-handed Elgar with his leg-

spinners into the rough outside the left-hander's off stump, eventually having him caught behind off an edge so faint that Elgar unsuccessfully sought a review. — AFP

Vikings upset Saints, Seahawks oust Eagles in NFL playoffs

WASHINGTON: Minnesota's Kirk Cousins threw a 4-yard touchdown pass to Kyle Rudolph 4:20 into overtime Sunday and the Vikings upset New Orleans 26-20 to reach the second round of the NFL playoffs.

The Vikings quarterback achieved his first career playoff victory by marching Minnesota 75 yards in nine plays, sparked by his 43-yard completion to Adam Thielen to the Saints 2-yard line three plays before the winning touchdown throw.

"Just happy we won. It was a great game. It was a great team win," said Cousins after his 14th career game-winning late drive. Minnesota's Dalvin Cook ran 28 times for 94 yards and two touchdowns for the visiting Vikings, who will travel to National Conference top seed San Francisco next Saturday.

Seattle defeated host Philadelphia 17-9 in Sunday's other first-round playoff game to book a date next Sunday at National Conference second seed Green Bay. "Anticipating snow. Anticipating a great game," Seattle quarterback Russell Wilson said of Green Bay. "It'll be a great matchup."

Next weekend's American Conference games find Tennessee at top seed Baltimore on Saturday and Houston at second seed Kansas City on Sunday. Next week's hosts had first-round byes. New Orleans quarterback Drew Brees, 10 days shy of his 41st birthday, completed 26-of-33 passes for 208 yards and a touchdown but costly turnovers foiled the favored Saints.

"I'm so proud of the way we fought," Rudolph said. "Nobody gave us a chance to win today but us."

Cook's 1-yard touchdown run with 3:23 remaining in the third quarter capped an eight-play, 64-yard march to give Minnesota a 20-10 lead. But the Saints answered with an 85-yard drive in eight plays, which ended on a 20-yard Brees touchdown pass to Taysom Hill with 10:31 remaining, pulling New Orleans within 20-17. Brees went 5-for-5 passing for 71 yards in the scoring march.

Brees moved the Saints downfield again but Jamaican-born Danielle Hunter of the Vikings knocked loose a fumble, Brees's first of the season, and Minnesota's Jalyn Holmes recovered with 4:18 remaining. Saints defender A.J. Klein appeared to have recovered a Cook fumble and returned it for a touchdown on the next Vikings possession, but a video review overturned the play, ruling Cook was down before losing the ball, keeping Minnesota ahead.

New Orleans had a final chance in regulation time and Wil Lutz kicked a 49-yard field goal with two seconds remaining to pull the Saints level at 20-20 and force overtime.

Cook's 5-yard touchdown run with 23 seconds remaining in the second quarter gave the Vikings a 13-10 half-time lead. Alvin Kamara had a 4-yard touchdown run for New Orleans. Lutz had kicked a 29-yard field goal and Minnesota's Dan Bailey had field goals of 43 and 21 yards.

At Philadelphia, the Eagles suffered a major setback when quarterback Carson Wentz went out in the first quarter after taking a helmet-to-helmet hit from Seattle's Jadeveon Clowney. — AFP

India will find Australia a different proposition: Paine

SYDNEY: Australia have developed a ruthless streak in their home series sweeps against Pakistan and New Zealand and will present much stiffer opposition when India tour next year, captain Tim Paine said yesterday.

Paine's side wrapped up a 3-0 series triumph over the Black Caps by romping to 279-run victory at the Sydney Cricket Ground to make it five comprehensive wins out of five matches for the home summer.

"I came into this summer expecting to win all five Tests," Paine told reporters. "I think now we've got a team together that is really consistent, we've got a number of match-winners with both bat and ball and our lesser players have improved a hell of a lot over the last 12 months."

"We've probably become more ruthless which was something we wanted to be ... We've got great quality

throughout our side and it's a very exciting team to be part of." Next up for Australia in Test cricket is a tour of Bangladesh in June and July followed by what Paine described as a "mouthwatering" series at home to Virat Kohli's India.

India last visited in the 2018-19 season and, with Steve Smith and David Warner suspended after the ball-tampering scandal, earned their first series triumph on Australian soil. "We're certainly a different side than what they played against last year," Paine added. "There's (also) Test championship points at stake and I think both India and Australia are eyeing off that final so every point is going to be critical. "If we can continue our upward trend, you're potentially talking about the top two teams in the world so it's going to be an awesome series."

The victory over New Zealand brought Australia (296) closer to India (360) at the top of the World Test Championship table with the two nations occupying the positions which will earn places in the final at Lord's in 2021.

Paine said the way Australia approached the key moments in matches had changed since India last toured, resulting in the clinical displays against Pakistan and New Zealand.

"Every team wants to be ruthless," he said. "(But) I think there were probably periods in the Test series against India we should have capitalised on, but through wanting it too much, or trying too hard, or putting too much pressure on ourselves, we let it slip," Paine added. "When those big moments come now, we just focus on executing our roles." — Reuters