

BRAVO NEARS TON AS LYON PUTS WINDIES IN A SPIN

HOBART: Nathan Lyon put the skids under the flailing West Indies as Australia set course for an overwhelming early victory despite Darren Bravo holding on in the first Test in Hobart yesterday. At the close of a stop-start day through showers, the Windies were 207 for six with Bravo offering spirited resistance on 94 and Kemar Roach in support on 31. Bravo and Roach kept the Windies innings pulse beating with an unbeaten seventh-wicket stand of 91. "I think the guys are confident in Darren and me at the crease. We've done a pretty good job so far, hopefully we can carry on tomorrow and do a much better job," Roach said.

Lyon claimed two wickets in one over to trigger a middle-order collapse to have the West Indies in familiar trouble in their chase after a mammoth declaration of 583 for four on the second day. The probing off-spinner snared the wickets of Marlon Samuels and Jermaine Blackwood in his seventh over along with opener Rajendra Chandrika for 175 Test wickets to leave the hapless Caribbean tourists struggling to avoid a heavy defeat with three days left.

"I'm really confident in my skill set to get the job done. The ball is coming out beautifully out of my hand in the nets and I've been working hard," said Lyon, who is playing in his 50th Test match. The Windies sticky predicament was accentuated by the dismissal of skipper Jason Holder, the last of the recognized batsmen at the crease with Bravo. Holder refused to seek a referral after being struck high on the pad by Peter Siddle and walked off for 15, leaving his side in deep strife at 116 for six. Replays showed that the ball was missing the stumps and the towering Holder may have stayed on as the players left the field for a brief rain break.

The West Indies efforts were in sharp contrast to Australia's run spree, propelled by a record 449-run fourth-wicket stand by Adam Voges and Shaun Marsh.

The West Australian pair eclipsed the fourth-wicket Test record of 437 set by Sri Lankans Thilan Samaraweera and Mahela Jayawardene against Pakistan in 2009. It was also the biggest Test stand by Australians at home, bettering the 405-run fifth-wicket partnership by Sid Barnes and Don Bradman against England in Sydney in 1946. But the duo fell two runs short of Australia's all-time highest partnership for any wicket of 451 held by Bill Ponsford and Bradman against England at The Oval in 1934.

Voges also posted Australia's highest score against the West Indies with an unbeaten 269, eclipsing Doug Walters' 242 in 1969. Marsh holed out just before lunch for 182, caught on the ropes by Bravo off spinner Jomel Warrican, ending a day's occupation of the crease as he compiled his highest Test score. Australia hammered 145 runs in the session to go to lunch at 583 for four enabling Steve Smith to declare the innings during the break. "That partnership between Voges and Marsh was unbelievable and to have those guys out in the middle for that long and to do that job has put us in a pretty good position as bowlers," Lyon said. "It's now up to us to go out and take 20 wickets."

The Windies made a steady start after lunch, but soon began to unravel. Kraigg Brathwaite lasted 26 balls before Josh Hazlewood trapped him leg before wicket for two in the ninth over. Chandrika followed in the 20th over when he was deceived by a drifting Lyon delivery and got an outside edge to Smith at slip for 25. Samuels lasted only 14 balls before he was splendidly caught and bowled by Lyon for nine. Blackwood didn't see out Lyon's over and was gone five balls later, caught at bat-pad by Joe Burns, giving the spinner three for 18. The Windies attack went down a bowler when quick Shannon Gabriel left the field with what a team spokesman said was a stress reaction in his left ankle, putting him in doubt for the rest of the series. —AFP



HOBART: Australian spinner Nathan Lyon dives to take a catch to dismiss West Indies batsman Marlon Samuels on the second day of the first cricket Test match in Hobart yesterday. —AFP

SCOREBOARD

HOBART, Australia: Scores at the close of the second day of the first Test between Australia and the West Indies at Bellerive Oval in Hobart yesterday:

Australia 1st innings (438-3 overnight)		West Indies 1st innings	
J. Burns b Gabriel	33	K. Brathwaite lbw b Hazlewood	2
D. Warner c Ramdin b Warrican	64	R. Chandrika c Smith b Lyon	25
S. Smith c Blackwood b Warrican	10	D. Bravo not out	94
A. Voges not out	269	M. Samuels c and b Lyon	9
S. Marsh c Bravo b Warrican	182	J. Blackwood c Burns b Lyon	0
M. Marsh not out	1	D. Ramdin b Hazlewood	8
Extras (b4, lb3, w3, nb14)	24	J. Holder lbw b Siddle	15
Total (4 wickets declared; 114 overs)	583	K. Roach not out	31
Fall of wickets: 1-75 (Burns), 2-104 (Smith), 3-121 (Warner), 4-570 (S. Marsh)		Extras (b7, lb10, w1, nb5)	23
Bowling: Taylor 17-0-108-0 (2nb, 1w), Roach 16-1-99-0 (4nb, 1w), Gabriel 10-1-59-1 (4nb), Holder 24-3-75-0 (4nb, 1w), Warrican 28-1-158-3, Brathwaite 13-0-52-0, Blackwood 6-0-25-0		Total (6 wickets; 65 overs)	207
Did not bat: P. Nevill, P. Siddle, J. Hazlewood, J. Pattinson, N. Lyon		Fall of wickets: 1-17 (Brathwaite), 2-58 (Chandrika), 3-78 (Samuels), 4-78 (Blackwood), 5-89 (Ramdin), 6-116 (Holder)	
		Bowling: Hazlewood 16-4-43-2, Pattinson 15-0-68-0 (5nb, 1w), Siddle 12-5-22-1, Lyon 19-6-43-3, M. Marsh 3-1-14-0	
		To bat: J. Taylor, J. Warrican, S. Gabriel.	

SCOREBOARD

DUNEDIN, New Zealand: Scoreboard at stumps on the second day of the first Test between New Zealand and Sri Lanka at University Oval in Dunedin yesterday:

New Zealand 1st innings (overnight 409-1)	
M. Guptill c Chandimal b Mathews	156
T. Latham c & b Lakmal	22
K. Williamson c Karunaratne b Pradeep	88
R. Taylor lbw Pradeep	8
B. McCullum c Vithanage b Siriwardana	75
M. Santner c Chandimal b Chameera	12
B. Watling c Vithanage b Chameera	5
D. Bracewell lbw Pradeep	47
T. Southee c Siriwardana b Lakmal	2
N. Wagner c Jayasundera b Pradeep	7
T. Boult not out	0
Extras: (b4, lb3, w1, nb1)	9
Total (for 10 wickets, 96.1 overs)	431
Fall of wickets: 1-56 (Latham), 2-229 (Williamson), 3-245 (Taylor), 4-334 (McCullum), 5-359 (Santner), 6-365 (Watling), 7-394 (Guptill), 8-399 (Southee), 9-426 (Wagner), 10-431 (Bracewell)	
Bowling: Lakmal 16-1-69-2, Pradeep 23.1-2-112-4, Mathews 9-2-28-1, Chameera 20-2-112-2 (w1), Herath 19-1-46-0, Jayasundera 5-0-33-0 (nb1), Siriwardana 4-0-24-1	
Sri Lanka 1st innings	
D. Karunaratne c Watling b Santner	84
K. Mendis c Watling b Boult	8
U. Jayasundera c Watling b Wagner	1
D. Chandimal not out	83
A. Mathews c Watling b Southee	2
K. Vithanage not out	10
Extras (b1, lb4, nb4)	9
Total: (for 4 wickets, 81 overs)	197
Fall of wickets: 1-19 (Mendis), 2-29 (Jayasundera), 3-151 (Karunaratne), 4-156 (Mathews)	
Bowling: Boult 16-5-38-1, Southee 16-4-35-1, Bracewell 16-4-29-0 (nb4), Wagner 13-2-53-1, Santner 19-6-37-1, Williamson 1-1-0-0.	

KARUNARATNE STANDS TALL FOR INEXPERIENCED LANKA

DUNEDIN: Dimuth Karunaratne had recognized prior to the first test against New Zealand that he was now the senior man in the top order for Sri Lanka and he needed to stand up and be counted to guide his younger team mates in their two-test series. The 27-year-old left hander was considered a veteran in the top of the order, having played 23 previous tests, with his opening partner Kusal Mendis playing just his second, while number three Udara Jayasundera was making his debut.

"There is no (Kumar) Sangakkara and Mahela (Jayawardene) so we have to put our hands up and play big knocks," Karunaratne said in a televised interview after he made a patient 84 in Sri Lanka's 197 for four at the close of play at University Oval in Dunedin of the second day. "We have to play with the youngsters and hang

on with them, rotate the strike and try to get a big one and (for me) to play a senior role." Unfortunately Mendis and Jayasundera were unable to put that advice into action, with the side slumping to 29-2 before the opener combined with fellow 'veteran' Dinesh Chandimal, also playing his 24th test, to patiently rebuild Sri Lanka's innings.

The opening batsman, who had a previous reputation as a dashing player who needlessly gave his wicket away chasing the shot that was not quite on, buckled down with Chandimal and thwarted, then frustrated, New Zealand's attack. He took 136 deliveries to reach his sixth test half century, though it was brought up with a elegant straight drive off Neil Wagner for his fifth boundary. After tea he had looked set to secure his fourth test century but he fell tantalizingly close and it was something of a surprise given the way he had blunted the efforts of New Zealand's disciplined four-pronged pace attack.

Having resisted temptation for so long, he sat back and looked to punch a wide delivery from left arm spinner Mitchell Santner behind point, only for the ball not to turn and he succeeded in giving BJ Watling the third of his four catches in the innings. The dismissal ended his 122-run partnership with Chandimal, who was left 83 not out with Sri Lanka 197-4 at the close and will now need to take on the mantle left by Karunaratne to ensure his side continue to chip away at the home side's 431. "I did all the hard work in the first few overs and unfortunately I didn't get to bat through the innings and get a big one," Karunaratne added. "I missed out on a golden opportunity." —Reuters