

Sports

Perera takes Sri Lanka to sensational win in S Africa

Sri Lanka's second win in 14 Test matches in South Africa

SCOREBOARD

Final scores on the fourth day of the first Test between South Africa and Sri Lanka at Kingsmead yesterday.

South Africa, first innings, 235
Sri Lanka, first innings, 191
South Africa, second innings, 259

Sri Lanka, second innings (overnight 83-3)	
D. Karunaratne lbw b Philander	20
L. Thirimanne c Du Plessis b Rabada	21
O. Fernando c Du Plessis b Steyn	37
K. Mendis c De Kock b Olivier	0
K. Perera not out	153
N. Dickwella c and b Steyn	0
D. de Silva lbw b Maharaj	48
S. Lakmal c Du Plessis b Maharaj	0
L. Embuldeniya c Markram b Olivier	4
K. Rajitha lbw b Maharaj	1
V. Fernando not out	6
Extras (b2, lb11, w1)	14
Total (9 wkts, 85.3 overs)	304
Fall of wickets: 1-42 (Thirimanne), 2-42 (Karunaratne), 3-52 (Mendis), 4-110 (O. Fernando), 5-110 (Dickwella), 6-206 (De Silva), 7-206 (Lakmal), 8-215 (Embuldeniya), 9-226 (Rajitha)	
Bowling: Steyn 18-1-71-2, Philander 8-3-13-1, Maharaj 20-1-71-3, Rabada 22.3-3-97-1 (1w), Olivier 16-3-35-2, Markram 1-0-4-0.	

Result: Sri Lanka won by one wicket

Series: Sri Lanka lead the two-match series 1-0

DURBAN: Kusal Perera carried Sri Lanka to a sensational one-wicket win on the fourth day of the first Test against South Africa at Kingsmead yesterday as he hit a career-best 153 not out. Perera and Vishwa Fernando put on an unbeaten 78 in a last-wicket partnership to secure only Sri Lanka's second win in 14 Test matches in South Africa.

Victory seemed unlikely when the ninth wicket fell with the total on 226, with the tourists chasing a target of 304. But the left-handed Perera successfully farmed the strike, with South African captain Faf du Plessis persisting with wide-spread fields for the in-form batsman, while Fernando only had to face 27 balls during a 96-ball partnership.

Perera was on 86 when the ninth wicket fell but managed to keep most of the strike and to hit some telling blows in an innings of 200 balls which included 12 fours and five sixes. "It was a superman effort," said Du Plessis. "He (Perera) deserves all the accolades."



'It was a superman effort,' said Du Plessis

LOW PREVIOUS AVERAGE

South Africa took the second new ball with the total on 263 but still kept most of their fielders on the boundary for Perera, who hit sixes off both Dale Steyn and Kagiso Rabada before slashing Rabada to third man for the winning boundary.

Perera, who came into the match with a career batting average below 30 and with his only previous century in 14 previous Tests having been made against Zimbabwe in Harare two seasons ago, shared three important partnerships.



DURBAN: Sri Lanka's Kusal Perera (R) celebrates the victory after hitting the winning runs with Vishwa Fernando (L) during the fourth day of the first Cricket Test between South Africa and Sri Lanka at the Kingsmead Stadium in Durban yesterday. — AFP

He put on 58 for the fourth wicket with debutant Oshado Fernando (37) and 96 for the sixth wicket with Dhananjaya de Silva (48) before his extraordinary association with Vishwa Fernando.

"I'm a little tired now, I don't know what to say," said Perera when he received the man of the match award. "I did my part but we are winning as a team."

The stand with Oshado Fernando was broken by Dale Steyn, who had Fernando caught at second slip by South African captain Faf du Plessis. Two balls later he caught Niroshan Dickwella off his own bowling.

Sri Lanka were still a distant 194 runs short of their target when Perera was joined by De Silva, Sri Lanka's

last recognised batsman.

South Africa, who were without opening bowler Vernon Philander because of a strained left hamstring, struggled for the next two hours as Perera and De Silva brought the target down to single figures.

Left-arm spinner Keshav Maharaj took two wickets off successive balls, dismissing De Silva leg before wicket and having Suranga Lakmal caught at slip.

The next two wickets fell quickly - but what seemed certain victory for South Africa turned into a triumph for the tourists, who are assured of at least a share of the honours in a two-match series. The second Test starts in Port Elizabeth on Thursday. — AFP

Guptill runs flow sweeps N Zealand past Bangladesh

CHRISTCHURCH: A rejuvenated Martin Guptill wound back the clock with his second century in as many games as a clinical New Zealand clinched their one-day series against Bangladesh in Christchurch yesterday.

The long-serving opener, who had a disappointing recent series against India, rated his 118 as a more satisfying knock than the unbeaten 117 when he returned to form in the first match against Bangladesh.

"There was a lot of flow and rhythm in that one," he said after New Zealand comfortably knocked off their 227-run target for the loss of two wickets and with 13.5 overs to spare. "It felt like I got back to where I was a couple of years ago." Guptill cut, drove and pulled the Bangladesh attack apart as New Zealand cruised to victory and went 2-0 up in the three-

match series. With the World Cup looming, New Zealand skipper Kane Williamson was pleased to see his side had taken lessons from the 4-1 drubbing inflicted by India. "It was what we were wanting," he said. "That was a really tough series and (the) guys got taught some harsh lessons and it's important you learn from those." Today and in the last game there were a couple of nice performances obviously led by Martin Guptill. Against India's tight bowling, Guptill was restricted to a top score of 15. But against a less confining Bangladesh attack, he scored freely, with 14 fours and four sixes from the 88 deliveries he faced.

After rolling Bangladesh for 226, Guptill made a flying start in New Zealand's reply as they passed through 10 overs at 59 for one while Bangladesh were 32 for two at the same stage. Mustafizur Rahman claimed the early wicket of Henry Nicholls for 14, leaving Kane Williamson to partner Guptill in a 143-run stand for the second wicket.

When Guptill went in similar fashion to Nicholls, caught on the boundary by Liton Das off Mustafizur Rahman in the 29th over, New Zealand were 188 for two. Williamson and Ross Taylor then guided the home side to the finish

with Williamson not out 65 and Taylor on 21.

SLOPPING FIELDING

After Williamson won the toss and opted to bowl under cloudy skies, the Bangladesh top order again failed to fire. They were in trouble at 93 for five after 21 overs before Mohammad Mithun and Sabbir Rahman provided some backbone for the innings, putting on 75 for the sixth wicket. Mithun again played the anchor role, as he did with his hard-fought 62 in the first match. In game two, he scored 57 off 69 deliveries before he was bowled by Todd Astle, while Sabbir contributed 43 off 65. New Zealand assisted the Bangladesh cause with 23 extras and some sloppy fielding while Rahman had fortune on his side when an edge off a Todd Astle delivery nicked the stumps but the bats stayed on.

Colin de Grandhomme had an eventful first over that lasted 11 deliveries, included five wides and also produced the wicket of Soumya Sarkar who was caught by Ross Taylor for 22. But Taylor dropped two catches in the following overs. Ferguson finished as the most successful New Zealand bowler with three for 43. The third and final ODI is in Dunedin next Wednesday, followed by three Test matches. — AFP

Kaepernick agrees to confidential NFL settlement

NEW YORK: Colin Kaepernick, whose kneeling protests sparked a firestorm of controversy, has reached a settlement with the NFL over his collusion grievance against the league, his attorneys said Friday. But a confidentiality clause will keep details of the arrangement private, the deal being made ahead of a planned final arbitration hearing on the grievance that was to be heard later this month.

Kaepernick and former San Francisco 49ers teammate Eric Reid both filed a lawsuit against the NFL saying owners and officials colluded to keep them off NFL rosters for their decision to make a kneeling protest during the US anthem.

Reid signed a one-year deal as an injury replacement last season with the Carolina Panthers and on Thursday inked a new three-year contract with the same club but Kaepernick has been unemployed since opting out of his contract in March 2017, missing two full NFL campaigns.

Kaepernick, a 31-year-old signal caller who guided the 49ers to the 2013 Super Bowl, had said he was only interested in a settlement if it meant a solid financial deal was reached. But it could also mean that Kaepernick, who has signed a deal with Nike in the wake of being ignored by the NFL for two seasons, might yet return to the league.

NFL officials denied collusion claims by Kaepernick and Reid despite comments from US President Donald Trump that urged owners to fire any "son of a bitch" who knelt during the anthem after many NFL players followed Kaepernick's lead in 2017.

Kaepernick and Reid said they were

protesting racial inequality and social injustice. Trump claimed their actions were an insult to the flag, the nation and the military. In a statement released on the Twitter account of attorney Mark Geragos, the law firm dealing with Kaepernick's legal action against the NFL said the two sides have come to terms without indicating what those terms were.

"For the past several months, counsel for Mr. Kaepernick and Mr. Reid have engaged in an ongoing dialogue with representatives of the NFL," the Geragos and Geragos firm's statement said. "As a result of those discussions, the parties have decided to resolve the pending grievances. The resolution of this matter is subject to a confidentiality agreement so there will be no further comment by any party." Mark Geragos's past clients have included pop icon Michael Jackson and musician Chris Brown.

The NFL Players Association supported the decision by Kaepernick and Reid despite not knowing exact details of the settlement. "Today, we were informed by the NFL of the settlement of the Colin Kaepernick and Eric Reid collusion cases. We are not privy to the details of the settlement, but support the decision by the players and their counsel," the NFLPA said.

"We continuously supported Colin and Eric from the start of their protests, participated with their lawyers throughout their legal proceedings and were prepared to participate in the upcoming trial in pursuit of both truth and justice for what we believe the NFL and its clubs did to them."

"We are glad that Eric has earned a job and a new contract, and we continue to hope that Colin gets his opportunity as well." One of the most respected elder statesmen of American sport, NBA great Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, told CNBC on Friday that he was "happy" Kaepernick can now move forward.

"He should be playing in the NFL," said Abdul-Jabbar, who has long championed the quarterback's right to speak out. "I hope it is settled to his satisfaction. It's been too long." — AFP

Uruguay's Indian cricketers searching for permanent home

MONTEVIDEO: Every Sunday, close to a statue of Indian independence hero Mahatma Gandhi, a group of Indian ex-pats take over a patch of land in Uruguay's capital Montevideo for a game of cricket.

Tucked in between the Rio de la Plata estuary and the long promenade known as the "rambla" that stretches from one side of Montevideo to the other, Avijit Mukherjee prepares to bat, watched eagerly by his Uruguayan girlfriend. "I played in my country but with a lot more infrastructure," said the 28-year-old Mukherjee, whose girlfriend Veronica is the main reason he has stayed in Uruguay. "There are stadiums and many places to play in India, whereas here we only have one." Although cricket was first played in Montevideo by British expat workers even before the foundation of the independent republic in 1828, its practice died out in the 1980s. But following an influx of Indian immigrants to Uruguay at the turn of the century, cricket steadily returned to Montevideo. First there were one-off matches. Then, the players organized their own league and even set up a Uruguayan national team.

At the end of last year, Uruguay, whose team was made up almost entirely of Indian expats, finished second in the South American championships in Colombia.

While the cricketers are now established on their little patch of land, their initial appearance was not entirely welcomed by local footballers playing on an adjacent pitch. "We came like spiders and rebuked them," recalls Daniel Mosco, a local resident who has been playing football in that field for 30 years. The issue was quickly resolved, though, and the cricketers agreed to start playing only once the football matches had



MONTEVIDEO: Indians living in Uruguay play a shot during a cricket match along Montevideo's seaside promenade on February 10, 2019. — AFP

finished. With no fixed cricket markings, players use flour to draw white lines. Now, bat can be heard crashing against ball until sunset.

Even though they've been here for years, the shouts of "howzat!" and "wait on" still elicit glances from locals making their way along the rambla. They make a curious spectacle for people little accustomed with either cricket or India. Mosco, for one, was surprised that the players speak to each other in English. And there's another surprise in the form of 29-year-old doctor Saied Muhammad Asif Raza: he's from Pakistan.

"Between the governments and in (professional) cricket there are always problems, but the people get on really well and within the team there are no problems whatsoever," said Asif. He left his home town of Multan, 10 hours from Islamabad, at 19 and moved to Cuba thanks to a Fidel Castro scholarship.

After returning home, he found he couldn't readapt to his own culture. "I didn't come here to find a better life economically, I had a better life in my country because in my family we didn't lack for anything," said Asif.

"The thing is that when you live many years away, nowhere is home, and cricket brings me close to it." Although now at home on their small patch, finding something more permanent is crucial to Montevideo's cricketers. "We're looking for a permanent ground," Beerbal Maniyattukudy, the Uruguayan cricket association's secretary, told AFP. "We have 120 players this year. On top of that we're starting some women's teams and for now we have 20 people interested. We also have plans for an under-15s league." The solution may lie with Uruguay's most popular football team: Penarol.

Penarol started life as the Central Uruguay Railway Cricket Club (CURCC), founded by British railway workers in 1891.

It was a multisport club-but just over 20 years later, its football section broke off and was absorbed by a newly created team, Penarol. The original club's cricket section disappeared as football became the main focus-but it was relaunched a week ago. And crucially, Penarol are planning to build a cricket pitch an hour outside Montevideo. — AFP



NEW YORK: In this file photo taken on September 08, 2018, a Nike ad featuring American football quarterback Colin Kaepernick is displayed in New York City. Colin Kaepernick and the NFL have reached a settlement agreement to the former quarterback's collusion grievance against the league, his attorneys said Friday. — AFP