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The Island Sports

Thursday 10th September, 2009

Samaraweera stands tall in massive Sri Lanka win

by Rex
Clementine

Sri Lanka set sights on making their way to the Compaq Cup final winning the curtain-raiser of the four match series against New Zealand by 97 runs at the R. Premadasa Stadium on Tuesday. The hosts owed their comprehensive win very much to middle order batsman, Thilan Samaraweera, if not for whose maiden ODI hundred, the game could have turned out to be a low scoring thriller.

After setting the New Zealanders a target of 217 in 50 overs, Sri Lanka bowled out the opposition for 119 runs in 36.1 overs to take an early lead in the tri-nation series as Lasith Malinga ended with four wickets.

This was also New Zealand's third lowest total against Sri Lanka in ODIs.

The star for the Sri Lankans was undoubtedly Samaraweera, who at the age of 32, became the oldest player to make his maiden ODI century. The previous record holder was

former captain, Arjuna Ranatunga, who achieved the feat at the age of 31.

While Samaraweera has hit a purple patch this year in Tests having scored over 1000 runs with two hundreds and two double hun-

dreds, the selection of Samaraweera to the ODI side was not very much appreciated by some.

But his hundred, when chips were down, laid any doubts about his place in the side to rest on a day Sri Lanka's top order failed miserably.

Samaraweera, who played his first One-Day International 11 years ago, three years before his Test debut, was soon labelled a Test Match specialist with the odd appearance in the shorter version of the game.

Playing his 22nd ODI on Tuesday, Samaraweera walked in with the total on 22 for three and saw captain Kumar Sangakkara (18) and Thilina Kandamby (15) depart after brief resistance and were five for 69 half way through their innings with a low total likely in the cards.

Thilan Samaraweera acknowledges the crowd after reaching his maiden hundred in one day internationals. Samaraweera posted 104 to help Sri Lanka gain a 97-win over the Kiwis.



SCOREBOARD

Sri Lanka	
T. M. Dilshan b Tuffey	4
S. Jayasuriya c Butler b Bond	7
M. Jayawardene c Taylor b Bond	0
K. Sangakkara c Oram b Butler	18
T. Samaraweera b Butler	104
T. Kandambi c Taylor b Vettori	15
A. Mathews b Bond	51
N. Kulasekera not out	6
T. Thushara not out	6
Extras: (3lb, 2w)	5
TOTAL: (for seven wickets)	216
Overs: 50	

Fall of wickets: 1-4, 2-5, 3-22, 4-38, 5-69, 6-196, 7-204.

Did not bat: L. Malinga, A. Mendis.

Bowling: Tuffey 9-0-35-1, Bond 10-2-43-3 (2w), Butler 10-1-55-2, Oram 6-0-22-0, Vettori 8-0-31-1, McCullum 7-1-27-0.

New Zealand	
B. McCullum b Malinga	14
J. Ryder lbw b Thushara	0
M. Guptill c S'kara b Kulasekera	3
R. Taylor lbw b Kulasekera	2
G. Elliot b Jayasuriya	41
J. Oram c Sangakkara b Malinga	4
N. McCullum b Malinga	0
D. Vettori lbw b Jayasuriya	10
I. Butler b Malinga	25
D. Tuffey run out	2
S. Bond not out	1
Extras: (6b, 1lb, 10w)	17
TOTAL: (all out)	119
Overs: 36.1	

Fall of wickets: 1-2, 2-5, 3-7, 4-37, 5-41, 6-41, 7-76, 8-101, 9-116, 10-119.

Bowling: Kulasekera 6-1-18-2, Thushara 6-1-5-1, Mendis 7-1-14-1 (1w), Malinga 6-1-0-28-4 (6w), Mathews 5-0-19-0 (3w), Jayasuriya 6-0-28-2.

Toss: Sri Lanka
Result: Sri Lanka won by 97 runs
Umpires: A. de Silva (SL), B. Doctrove (WI)
Third Umpire: K. Dharmasena (SL)
Match Referee: C. Broad (Eng)



Sri Lanka's Lasith Malinga, right, celebrates the dismissal of New Zealand's Brendon McCullum in their first limited-overs tri-series cricket match in Colombo, Sri Lanka, Tuesday, Sept. 8, 2009. India is the third team in the four-match tri-series. (AP Photo/Eranga Jayawardena)

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reaching three figures off a misfield. Sri Lanka opted for the Batting Power Play in the 45th over and Samaraweera cashed in immediately with three fours off an Ian Butler over.

He was involved in a 127-run stand for the sixth wicket in just 134 deliveries with Mathews, a new record for the sixth wicket for Sri Lanka against New Zealand going beyond the previous record of 103 runs between Russell Arnold and Suresh Perera at the same venue in 2001.

The partnership was broken when Mathews was dismissed in the 48th over after completing his second half-century while Samaraweera departed in the penultimate over of the innings having posted 104 runs.

The recent trend of sides batting second having to struggle continued as New Zealand were bowled out for 119 with more than 13 overs to spare. After Thilan Thushara trapped Jesse Ryder leg before wicket for a duck off his second delivery, Nuwan Kulasekara picked up Martin Guptill (03) and Ross Taylor (00) in one over to reduce New Zealand to seven for three.

But Samaraweera had other ideas and engineered a terrific fight back partnering young Angelo Mathews in a record breaking stand.

Since scoring a boundary in the third over of the innings, Sri Lanka were denied one for 23.5 overs before Samaraweera broke the deadlock hitting Shane Bond for four. That stroke marked the end of a period of consolidation which both batsmen did with plenty of overs available and they launched a counter-attack from thereon to give the side a competitive total.

Samaraweera had failed to make a half-century in his 22 previous appearances for Sri Lanka in this form of the game and when an opportunity opened, he made it count with a solid century

Lasith Malinga then denied any New Zealand fight back, finishing with four for 28 including three wickets off his fourth over.

Only three batsmen managed double figures with Grant Elliott going on to top score with 41 runs in 76 deliveries before being bowled by Sanath Jayasuriya.

Sri Lanka lose to mighty Hong Kong 51-10

by Ravi Nagahawatte

Sri Lanka's Under-20 youth rugby players lost to mighty Hong Kong 51-10 in a key fixture of the on-going Asian Youth Rugby Championships in Hong Kong on Wednesday.

Sri Lanka conceded eight tries in the match and only managed to cross the opposition goal line twice during the match. Prop Nikila Senanayake scored both tries for the losers.

Sources from Hong Kong said that the Sri Lankans had put up a spirited display against the host nation team which was well muscled with the inclusion of expatriates.

Sri Lanka now meets South Korea in the third place play off, scheduled for 2.10 pm local time on Saturday.

The islanders earlier beat Singapore 65 nil in their maiden outing.

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