

England collapse on a bouncy pitch goes unnoticed

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South Africa has geared themselves up nicely for the tour to India by winning the last Test against England to square the series. They may well say that they morally won the series because in two of the Tests that were drawn the last English wicket was at the crease.

However there is no such thing as a moral win for then every player who gets out at 99 will say that he morally scored a century. All this is good to cover up for the deficiencies be it skill and temperament that prevented the team and the individual in going that extra step that separates a win from a draw.

It is spin of another kind which is indulged in not by players who know better but those whose jobs are on the line and who maybe trying to cover up for any earlier boastful statements made by them and thus trying to take the Mickey out of the poor ignorant. England's collapse on a pacey Wanderers pitch in both innings did not bring forth any statements about not being able to play pace but if the same thing had happened to India then these same experts would have said the usual bit about India's batsmen being flat track bullies despite stats showing that they have a far better record than those who regularly play pace bowling in their domestic cricket.



The recent Test series in Australia may just have pointed out to a chink in Ricky Ponting's armory. The West Indians gave him a hard time with short deliveries and the Pakistanis too had him back in the pavilion with the short stuff. Ponting is an instinctive hooker and puller of the short ball but it is a shot that a batsman even as great as Ponting cannot always control.

He would have been out for a duck in the third Test in Hobart but Mohammad Aamer floored a catch that a schoolboy should have taken and the Australian skipper didn't look back and made the Pakistanis pay with a cracking double ton.

The hallmark of great batsmen is that if they get a reprieve they make the opposition pay and Ponting along with Michael Clarke had a huge partnership which took the game away from the visitors. In the second innings too the Australian skipper looked well set to get another century that would have inched him closer to Sachin Tendulkar. It is the Australian skipper Ricky Ponting with his double century and a near century who is the CEAT International Cricketer of this Week.