

None in India has idea of what is a sporting pitch

3rd January 2010, Sunil Gavaskar

THE happenings at the Feroze Shah Kotla was a sad end to a year where India had got the Number One ranking in Test cricket and having already won the Test series and One-Day series against Sri Lanka were looking to finish on a high with another win in the nation's capital. While it is no surprise to see the finger pointing and blame game being played in the DDCA, once the spotlight shifts to India's tour of Bangladesh it will be in DDCA's interest to start preparing for the IPL season 3 and ensure that they provide a wicket of top quality so that any sanctions can be sought to be lessened. It will be a pity if the nation's capital is banned from having any top class cricket and the one sure way of seeing that such an occurrence doesn't happen again is to entrust responsibility to those who have experience and not those who have votes. Henceforth anybody who talks about having made a "sporting" pitch should be hung up to dry because nobody in India has an idea of what is a sporting pitch. What we should be looking for is good cricketing pitch where all facets of the game get a good chance to display their skills.



Cricket-wise those moaning that spinners are dying would have been pleasantly surprised to see two off-spinners dominating Tests in the Southern hemisphere. In Australia, Nathan Hauritz who keeps improving with every game picked up five wickets against a Pakistan team that should play spin better than most. Unfortunately the Pakistani batsmen either didn't rate Hauritz and so went after him carelessly or thought that their best chance was to score and so perished in the attempt. The superb bowling effort of young Mohammed Aamer thus went a begging by some ordinary batting by Pakistan.

In South Africa, Graeme Swann continues to pick wickets at will which should make Harbhajan Singh lick his lips in anticipation as South Africa are to play two Tests in India next month. Amazingly most of Swann's wickets were off the quicker delivery though his bowling Amla through the gate was a classic off-spinners dismissal.

Australia's batsmen, in the three-Test series against West Indies and in the first innings of the first Test against Pakistan, had got into the 90s without going on to a century but Shane Watson finally managed to get through that barrier and get to a century in the second innings. He has really come on since he was entrusted with the opening position and has along with Simon Katich and the best of them all, Virender Sehwag proven that openers are not always born but can be made too.

Watson, Hauritz and Swann were the week's outstanding performers and are thus CEAT International Cricketers of the Week.