

Spin Maharaj tames the Lankan lions

● Record eight-wicket haul helped South Africa fight back

● At stumps, the hosts were 277 for nine

● Sri Lanka, who won the first Test in Galle

Colombo | Sri Lanka

Spinner Keshav Maharaj thanked his lucky stars as well as the pitch yesterday after his record eight-wicket haul helped South Africa fight back on the opening day of the second Test against Sri Lanka.

"I think it was written in the



Accolades mean a lot more when you can win a Test match, so hopefully in the second innings I can put in another performance and be on the winning end of it

KESHAV MAHARAJ

stars by God that things worked out this way," Maharaj said after his 8-116, the best figures for a South African spinner in a first innings anywhere, in addition to his own personal record.

"I think I did get a little bit of assistance off the wicket. It is a little bit different here than in Galle, because the ball skids on. There's a chance of getting LBWs and also the top edge when the batsman sweeps."

At stumps, the hosts were 277 for nine at Colombo's Sinhalese Sports Club Ground, giving the Proteas hope they can avoid their first series defeat to Sri Lanka since 2006 after their drubbing in the first Test in Galle.

The left-arm Maharaj's first eight-for in 22 Tests hurt Sri Lanka with regular strikes after a 116-run opening stand between Danushka Gunathilaka, who hit 57, and Dimuth Karunaratne, who made 53.

Sri Lanka, who won the first Test in Galle, had elected to bat first in their bid to clinch the two-match series. Akila Dananjaya, on 16, and Rangana Herath, on 5, hung on until the close of play.

The islanders started on the right foot with Gunathilaka and Karunaratne mixing caution and aggression to keep the South African bowlers at bay on 93-0 at lunch.

The left-handed duo reached



South Africa's Keshav Maharaj celebrates after he dismissed Sri Lanka's Dhananjaya de Silva

their respective half-centuries just after lunch but fell to Maharaj's guile soon after.

Maharaj, South Africa's only regular spinner, got Karunaratne caught behind with a drifting delivery down the leg side. He got Gunathilaka in his very next over. And in the last session, he came out all guns blazing as the hosts lost six wickets with only Dhananjaya de Silva putting up some resistance with his 60-run knock.

Paceman Kagiso Rabada was

the only other bowler to pick up a wicket, dismissing Roshen Silva for 22.

The hosts, led by Suranga Lakmal, are without regular captain Dinesh Chandimal, who is suspended for the series over a ball-tampering charge. Coach Chandika Hathurusingha and manager Asanka Gurusinha have also been banned over the case.

Maharaj said though that he was not focused on personal records -- not yet anyway.

Peter Sagan strikes again



Slovakia's Peter Sagan, wearing the best sprinter's green jersey, celebrates as he crosses the finish line

AFP | Valence, France

Slovakian Peter Sagan underlined his sprint credentials for the third time on the Tour de France yesterday after powering to victory in the 13th stage from Bourg d'Oisans to Valence.

Sagan, of the Bora team, is one of the few real sprint specialists still in the race after surviving an Alpine stage trilogy that proved fatal to the hopes of rivals Mark Cavendish, Marcel Kittel, Andre Greipel, Dylan Groenewegen and Fernando Gaviria.

All the aforementioned exited the race over two tough days in the Alps, and Sagan -- who had won two stages on this edition so far -- was quick to capitalise.

"It was very beautiful to win today after three days in the Alps," said Sagan, whose 11th stage win on the race helped take his tally in the points competition to 398 points.

Norwegian Alexander Kristoff (UAE), who finished a close second, has 170 while Frenchman Arnaud Demare, of Groupama, has 133.

"I was on the wheel of (Alexander) Kristoff, then I made my move. But it wasn't easy for me. "The team did a great job, but in the last kilometre I was maybe in 20th or 25th position, so I had to sprint to get back up to the front."

Sagan was given extra work after Belgian upstart Philippe Gilbert (Quick Step) brazenly attacked a leading peloton full of ambitious sprinters 930 metres from the line. But Sagan, and his rivals didn't flinch.

They kept the pace high and one-day classics specialist Gilbert was caught, much to his dismay, with 245m remaining.

The Groupama team of Demare, as well as Kristoff's UAE outfit had been key in chasing down a relatively tame four-man breakaway in the closing kilometres of the race.

But the Frenchman came up short when it came to payback.

He launched his burst first, but, as Kristoff and Sagan came

standings

Class standings after the 13th stage of the Tour de France, a 169.5km ride from Le Bourg-d'Oisans to Valence

Points:

1. Peter Sagan (SVK/BOR) 398 pts
2. Alexander Kristoff (NOR/EAU) 170
3. Arnaud Dømare (FRA/FDJ) 133
4. John Degenkolb (GER/TRE) 128

5. Andrea Pasqualon (ITA/WGG) 100

Team overall:

1. Movistar 160 h 28:10.
2. Sky at 4:03.
3. LottoNL 12:06.
4. Bahrain 25:39.
5. AG2R La Mondiale 47:02.
6. Astana 52:16.
7. Giant 1 h 05:45.
8. Mitchelton 1 h 37:17.
9. BMC 1 h 40:17.
10. Katusha 1 h 44:47.

up on his left, Demare ran out of juice. "I thought I was going to win, I started my sprint well but I came up short. Sagan was too strong," he said.

Sagan now has one hand on a sixth green jersey, and one eye now on winning the final stage to the Champs Elysees.

But the 28-year-old Slovakian star, who on Thursday announced his impending divorce from his wife Katarina, won't be performing any of his trademark wheelies just yet.

The 14th stage is a difficult and technical ride over 188 km starting in Saint-Paul-Trois-Châteaux. Although Sky will be hoping to keep powder dry for the crucial third week, Froome said rivals could try to steal time on the steep, 3km-long climb to finish in Mende.

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2nd Test scoreboard

Sri Lanka

D. Gunathilaka c Rabada b Maharaj	57
D. Karunaratne c de Kock b Maharaj	53
D. de Silva lbw b Maharaj	60
K. Mendis c Rabada b Maharaj	21
A. Mathews c du Plessis b Maharaj	10
R. Silva b Rabada	22
N. Dickwella c du Plessis b Maharaj	5
D. Perera c Ngidi b Maharaj	17
A. Dananjaya not out	16
S. Lakmal c Markram b Maharaj	0
R. Herath not out	5
Extras (lb2, nb1, w8)	11
Total (9 wickets, 86 overs)	277

Zaman hits Pakistan's first ODI 200

● Fakhar hits record double ton

AFP | Bulawayo, Zimbabwe

Fakhar Zaman became the first Pakistan player to hit a double century in one-day internationals as Pakistan crushed Zimbabwe by 244 runs to go 4-0 up in their one-day series yesterday.

Zaman smashed 210 not out from 156 deliveries, moving past the previous record for a Pakistan batsman set by Saeed Anwar with his 194 more than 21 years ago.

That wasn't the only record to tumble.

Pakistan's openers blazed a world record 304-run stand, with Imam-ul-Haq hitting 113, the triple hundred partnership becoming Pakistan's biggest for

Scoreboard	
Fourth one-day international	
Pakistan	
I. ul Haq c Musakanda b W Masakadza	113
F. Zaman not out	210
A. Ali not out	50
Extras (b4, lb5, w17)	26
Total (1 wkt, 50 overs)	399
Did not bat: B Azam, S Malik, S Ahmed, F Ashraf, S Khan, Y Shah, J Khan, U Khan	
Fall of wickets: 1-304 (ul Haq)	
Bowling: Muzarabani 10-0-77-0 (3w); Ngarava 7-0-65-0 (1w); Tiripano 10-0-85-0 (3w); Chisoro 10-0-56-0 (2w); W Masakadza 10-0-78-1 (6w); H Masakadza 3-0-29-0	
Zimbabwe (all out, 42.4 overs)	155
Result: Pakistan won by 244 runs	

any wicket in ODIs.

It also broke the previous record for an opening stand in all

internationals, set by Sanath Jayasuriya and Upal Tharanga for Sri Lanka against England