

Cricket's fastest man meets sprint's fastest

His towering frame and athleticism on the cricket field gives the impression that he could have well been a world-class sprinter. Imagine, Andrew Symonds and world champion Asafa Powell competing to outrace each other. Exciting thought, indeed.

Symonds has often sought inspiration from other sports -- rugby league and the like -- and Wednesday, on the eve of the first Test against West Indies at Sabina Park, he slipped away from the team base for a training session with Powell, according to a report in the Sydney Morning Herald.

On a sweltering morning, Symonds and Stuart Karppinen, Australia's strength and conditioning trainer, assumed the roles of spectator as Powell continued his comeback from a chest injury in the shadows of Long Mountain.

'I always find that there's something to learn from other successful athletes, even if your sports aren't too similar,' Symonds said.

'What he (Powell) has achieved so far is pretty amazing, and it was great to see and hear first-hand about the things Asafa does to get where he is.'

Symonds and Karppinen snapped photographs of Powell and compared observational notes as the Commonwealth Games gold medallist -- who has broken 10 seconds for the 100m a staggering 33 times and holds the world record at 9.74 -- went through his paces.

Symonds must have surely learnt a few tricks on increasing his agility from Powell, the fastest man in history and favourite for 100 metres gold at the Beijing Olympics.

Symonds is looking forward to watching Powell at the Olympics.

'Knowing what I know now, it will make watching the Olympics later this year even more interesting.'

Powell, for his part, was delighted by the Australian's visit.

'Everybody knows who he is and what he's done. He's a great player. With travel and training it can be hard to keep up with the cricket, but I'll definitely try to get down to Sabina Park this week to watch him,' Powell said.

The burly Queenslander was also floored when Brigitte Foster-Hylton, a two-time Olympian and Commonwealth Games gold medallist in the 100m hurdles, informed him that his successful comeback from a detached tendon before last year's World Cup had served as her own inspiration when dealing with a similar injury this year.

'That made me feel quite amazing, to be honest, that she would say something like that,' Symonds said. 'She's been Jamaica's athlete of the year before, so for her to come up to me and say that was really touching.'

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