

Ponting receives ODI Championship shield

Australian captain Ricky Ponting, who was handed the International Cricket Council (ICC) ODI Championship shield Sunday, said it will be a challenge for the new players in the side to maintain the lofty standards set by their predecessors.

Australia was dislodged from the top spot by South Africa and had to be content with the second place just before the cut-off date last year. But the world champions regained their numero uno billing in the Reliance ICC ODI Championship table this year.

ICC's Principal Advisor Inderjit Singh Bindra handed over the shield to Ponting at a function at the Ferozshah Kotla Stadium here.

'We stumbled a bit last year to relinquish the top spot to South Africa. But we have worked hard to regain it. In all these years, we have managed to maintain very high standards and we hope to continue that,' Ponting said.

'There are some great challenges coming our way in Test and ODIs in 12-18 months against South Africa home and away. We have set some standards and our endeavour would be to remain the number one team in both forms of the game.

'Consistency has been the hallmark of this Australian side. There are lot of expectations and with youngsters coming in the team, it will be a challenge for us to maintain the brand of cricket we have played over the years.'

Bindra hailed the Australian side as worthy winner of the trophy.

'It has shown remarkable consistency in winning 25 of the 34 ODIs, with three no-results, since April 1, 2007.

'Australia narrowly missed out on the top slot at the cut-off date last year, but it came back strongly by making a clean sweep of the five match ODI series against the West Indies. This ability to bounce back with high quality performances has been the hallmark of this fantastic Australian side.'

(© IANS / India eNews)