

Dhoni moves up to second place in LG ICC Player Rankings

India wicketkeeper-batsman Mahendra Singh Dhoni has moved up to second position in the latest LG ICC Player Rankings for ODI batsmen, his highest ranking since May of 2006.

The 25-year-old has just completed a successful four-match series against Sri Lanka, having scored 115 runs in two innings, including a match-winning 67 not out in the third ODI at Margao. He is now averaging 46.61 in ODIs with a remarkable career strike-rate of 98.49.

Dhoni overtakes Australia captain Ricky Ponting, who did not play in Australia's 3-0 series defeat to New Zealand which concluded on Tuesday. Ponting is now in third position, just one ratings point ahead of England's Kevin Pietersen.

Dhoni's India team-mate Yuvraj Singh is up five places to 15th position, now just two places behind Rahul Dravid.

Stand-in captain for Australia Michael Hussey is still occupying the top spot and is the only batsman currently holding more than 800 ratings points (817).

West Indies all-rounder Chris Gayle has moved up two places to number five in the LG ICC Player Rankings for ODI batsmen while other players on an upward move include Matthew Hayden (up 11 places to 23rd spot) and Stephen Fleming (up four places to 24th).

Following New Zealand's 3-0 clean sweep of Australia, Fleming's side has moved ahead of Pakistan into third place in the LG ICC ODI Championship, a timely boost for the team ahead of the upcoming ICC Cricket World Cup in the West Indies.

As a reflection of their impressive run chases in New Zealand, other Black Cap batsmen have moved up the rankings as well as Fleming. Peter Fulton and Craig McMillan are in joint 43rd position having moved up 11 and six places respectively while Ross Taylor is up 18 places to 49th spot and Brendon McCullum is up five places to 56th position. The biggest mover of the week is Mark Gillespie who is up 27 places to 62nd spot.

Despite its recent run of defeats, Australia still boasts four batsmen in the top ten.

Meanwhile, South Africa's Shaun Pollock is now a phenomenal 157 ratings points clear at the top of the LG ICC Player Rankings for ODI bowlers. With his side now leading the LG ICC ODI Championship, Pollock is enjoying a timely peak in form with the ICC Cricket World Cup in the West Indies now less than three weeks away.

The 33-year-old KwaZulu Natal all-rounder is now way out in front from Glenn McGrath of Australia in second, Pollock's Proteas team-mate Makhaya Ntini in third and Kiwi Daniel Vettori in fourth.

Sri Lanka fast bowler Chaminda Vaas, who incidentally shares a birthday with Vettori, is just one place behind the slow left-armers having moved up two places past Australia's Brett Lee and Nathan Bracken.

Interestingly, Bracken has fallen from second place to eighth in the 25 days since Australia Day (26

January).

New Zealand's Shane Bond is also hitting his straps at the right time, following a good series against Australia. He is up three places to seventh spot in the latest LG ICC Player Rankings for ODI bowlers.

Pollock is still number one in the LG ICC Player Rankings for ODI all-rounders from Gayle in second place and England's Andrew Flintoff in third position. The only move in the top five is Jacques Kallis, who has gone up one place into fourth, past Sri Lanka veteran Sanath Jayasuriya.

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