

Tigers show the difference

Cricket

HASIBUR RAHMAN from Bogra

When Bangladesh completed a record 131-run bashing of Kenya at the Shaheed Chandu Stadium in Bogra yesterday, there was understandably no evidence of the same euphoria among the players that was common following victories against world's top teams including the last one against Sri Lanka.

No doubt, the way the Tigers started their campaign against the East Africans gave Habibur Bashar's men a great relief because of the past record where Kenya had won six out of seven ODIs.

The result also made a bold impression that Bangladesh are no more a side to be compared with the ICC associate members, especially after their superior international exposure.

Despite the convincing victory, captain Habibur Bashar was reserved about his judgement of a 4-0 whitewash, which is the desire of coach Dav Whatmore.

"Yes, it is satisfactory the way we finished the first game but there are still three matches to go. I can't say after one victory that we will make it 4-0 because Kenya have a knack to upset world's formidable sides," said a careful Bashar.

"They can bounce back and we should be cautious. Now our main target is to win the second game. There is no scope to be complacent at international level but the outcome has given one indication that we have improved as a team," he added.

The brittle top order getting runs to pile up a record 301 makes Bashar a happy man.

"If the top order is successful, we can do things like this. I am really excited with their success and now

we should try to be consistent in this area. Nafees played a very inspiring take away the match from us," said the dashing batsman, who was just dismissed for eight runs.

Nafees was disappointed with his dismissal as just nine runs shorts of the magical three-figure mark.

"Yes, the attempt to take a single was a bit risky but it is part of the game. I don't want to compare my earlier best (75) with this innings because I was up against world class bowlers from Australia," said the man-of-the-match.

Although Shahadat Hossain's name was not in the 12-man squad announced on Thursday, the right-arm paceman played as a supersub replacing Rajin Saleh.

Scoreboard of the first one-day international between Bangladesh and Kenya at the Shaheed Chandu Stadium in Bogra on Friday:

BANGLADESH
Omar c Tikolo b Ongondo 28
Nafees run out 91
Aftab c Mishra b Ongondo 62
Ashraf b Kamande 18
Rafique c Mishra b Odoyo 36
Kapali run out 1
Mortuza not out 44
Mashud run out 1
Razzak not out 0
Extras: (b-1, lb-1, w-16, nb-2) 20
Total: (For 7 wkts in 50 overs) 301
Fall of wkts: 1-92, 2-166, 3-205, 4-238, 5-242, 6-278, 7-285.

KEENYA
Otieno b Rassel 6
Obuya c Ashraf b Rassel 14
Tikolo c Aftab b Rassel 8
Suji c sub b Rafique 33
Modi c Aftab b Shahadat 1
Odoyo c Mashud b Razzak 16
Mishra st Mashud b Ashraf 43
Kamande b Rafique 4
Suji run out 12
Ongondo c Razzak b Ashraf 10

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PHOTO: AFP

Bangladesh opener Shahriar Nafees steers one down to the third-man fence on way to scoring a career best 91 during the first ODI against Kenya at the Shaheed Chandu Stadium in Bogra on Friday.



PHOTO: AFP

Gold winners Gagan Narang (2nd R) and Abhinav Bindra (R) of India share the podium with silver medalists Anjan Kumar Singha (L) and Asif Hossain Khan (2nd L) of Bangladesh after the men's 10m air rifle pairs final at the 18th Commonwealth Games in Melbourne on Friday.

Aussies take charge in Games

SPORTS REPORTER
AFP, Melbourne

Australia resisted a joint India and England offensive to seize control of the Commonwealth Games on Friday allowing the hosts to crank up the celebrations after their under-fire weightlifters were cleared of a doping slur.

Australia finished the day on top with 12 golds thanks to splitting the gold count with India in the shooting competition, where the two nations took three each, and in the pool where they shared the four titles with England.

But they hammered home their advantage by storming to a clean-sweep of the three golds in track cycling as well as wrapping up the women's gymnastics team event for the third successive time.

It wasn't all Australia, however, as Sri Lanka were smiling when Chinthana Vidanage delivered their first ever Commonwealth Games weightlifting gold and New Zealand won the rugby sevens.

Leisel Jones and Danni Miatke spearheaded the Aussie gold rush in the pool after a faltering opening night with Jones winning the 50m breaststroke and world champion Miatke taking the 50m butterfly.

England hit back, however, with two golds through Matthew Clay in the men's 50m backstroke and Ross Davenport in the 200m freestyle.

Miatke set a Games record time of 26.43 seconds in the other all-Australian medal sweep in the 50m butterfly. Jessicah Schipper was second and Alice Mills dead-heated with South African Lize-Mari Relief for the bronze.

Clay upstaged team-mate and Liam Tancock in an English one-two in the men's 50-metres backstroke final with South African Johannes Zandbergen third.

In the absence of superstar and world record holder Ian Thorpe, Davenport won the 200m freestyle from English team-mate Simon Burnett and Canada's Brent Hayden.

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Rain mars SL-Pak ODI

SPORTS REPORTER
AFP, Colombo

Seamer Farveez Maharoor and spinner Kaushal Lokuarachchi bagged three wickets apiece for Sri Lanka before their first one-dayer against Pakistan was abandoned due to rain here on Friday.

Maharoor posted figures of 3-24 and Lokuarachchi 3-47, but after restricting Pakistan to 201-8 in their 50 overs, the home side were denied a chance to chase the target by heavy showers.

Electing to field on a slow pitch at the Premadasa Stadium, the Sri Lankan bowlers bowled tightly and restricted the visitors to a low total.

Maharoor struck twice in successive overs to see the backs of opener Kamran Akmal (five) and Shoaib Malik (seven) who were both bowled with deliveries that cut back sharply.

The experienced duo of captain Inzamam-ul Haq and Mohammad Yousuf fought back with a 53-run partnership off 68 balls for the fourth wicket but then fell in quick

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Asif, Anjan bag silver

SPORTS REPORTER
AFP, Melbourne



Asif Hossain Khan won his second Commonwealth Games medal when the Bangladesh shooter bagged silver in the 10m air rifle team event yesterday pairing with Anjan Kumar Singha in Melbourne.

who clinched gold. The bronze went to Singapore duo Jun Hong Ong and Jin Jhang with 1177 points.

Asif, who defends his individual gold in his pet event on March 21 at the Melbourne International Shooting Club, told after his success that he is not worried about veteran marksman Bindra, who was outsmarted by the Bangladeshi youngster in Surrey at the 2002 Games.

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MEDAL TABLE

Country	G	S	B	Total
Australia	12	9	8	29
India	4	3	0	7
England	3	7	4	14
Canada	2	6	4	12
New Zealand	2	1	0	3
Scotland	2	0	3	5
South Africa	2	0	2	4
Malaysia	1	0	2	3
Sri Lanka	1	0	0	1
Bangladesh	0	1	0	1

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England look to regroup

Final Test begins today

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER
AFP, Mumbai

England coach Duncan Fletcher said his team would need to manage without strike bowler Steve Harmison, who has been ruled out of Saturday's third and final Test against India here due to a shin injury.

England are attempting to square the series after losing the second Test by nine wickets at Mohali. The opening match ended in a draw at Nagpur.

"We have just got to live with it (Harmison's absence) and not think of it as a curse," Fletcher said on Friday.

Harmison is the fifth member of the Ashes-winning squad unavailable for England's crucial match.

Regular skipper Michael Vaughan and fast bowler Simon Jones returned home due to injuries even before the series had started, while opener Marcus Trescothick left the squad because of personal reasons.

Veteran left-arm spinner Ashley Giles was ruled out ahead of the tour due to a hip problem.

"Sometimes these things happen. From our point of view these are huge losses as we have lost experienced players, but we just have to get on with it," said Fletcher.

England have yet to decide whether Harmison will be available for the one-day series which begins on March 28.

"We will look at him for a week, review his condition during this Test, and then see if he will be available for the first two one-dayers before making a decision if he goes back," said Fletcher.

England plan to go into the match with five specialist bowlers to ease pressure on ace all-rounder Flintoff in the absence of Harmison.

"We may go with five bowlers because we do not expect him (Flintoff) to do all the work," the England coach said.

"He is a major player. We just have to make sure that we don't put an enormous pressure on him. We just cannot afford that."

India captain Rahul Dravid conceded that Harmison's absence was a big blow for England already missing key players.

"It will be disappointing for England because Harmison has been a stand-out performer," said Dravid, who is set to become the sixth Indian to complete a century of Tests on Saturday.

Kapil Dev, Sunil Gavaskar, Dilip Vengsarkar, Sachin Tendulkar and Anil Kumble are the others to have figured in 100 or more Tests.

"It's a great feeling playing the 100th Test, but the focus will be on winning the match (and the series)," said Dravid.

The Indian captain hoped his spinners would be able to pose problems for England's batsmen on a track expected to favour them early in the match.

"The wicket here has got bounce and I think it will start taking spin late on the first day or the second day," he said.

Spinners dominated the last Test at this venue in 2004, with India beating Australia in two-and-a-half days. Part-time Australian spinner Michael Clarke also struck

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Rakib upsets Zia to stay atop

SPORTS REPORTER

Grand Master Ziaur Rahman crashed to his second successive defeat in the Mercantile Bank 32nd National Chess Championship when he was upset by International Master Abdullah Al Rakib in the seventh round at the BCF hall-room yesterday.

Defending champion Zia lost to IM Enamul Hossain in the previous round. Rakib improved his tally to 6.5 points to maintain sole lead IM Reefat Bin Sattar beat FIDE Master Sheikh Nasir Ahmed to follow at second place with six points.

Rakib won his seventh round

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Nazim keeps Ctg afloat



SPORTS REPORTER

Nazimuddin smashed his first first-class century of the season yesterday to steer Chittagong to a respectable 257-6 in the first innings on the first day of the crucial ninth round four-dayer against Rajshahi in the Ispahani Seventh National Cricket League.

The winners between Chittagong and Rajshahi, level on 32 points, will be poised to lift the title with only one more round to go.

Dhaka were spearheaded by Kamrul Islam's maiden first-class ton to pile up 316-6 against visiting Khulna while Sylhet were bowled out for 194 away at Barisal.

CHITTAGONG-RAJSHAHI
Chittagong, playing their home match at the BKSIP due to unavailability of the Chittagong Divisional Stadium, elected to bat after winning the toss but lost in-form Tamim Iqbal (8) and Gazi Salahuddin (5) with just 17 runs on board. Nafees Iqbal (26), who added 52 runs for the third wicket with Nazimuddin, was the next victim but the latter found an ally in Faisal Hossain to

steady the innings.

Ehsanul Haque, the most successful batsman of the season who came to the match with 826 runs, was dismissed for 18 with Chittagong struggling at 117-4 halfway through the second session.

However, Nazimuddin's 104 off 238 balls and left-hander Faisal's 111-ball 66 during a 113-run fifth wicket partnership repaired the damage. Nazimuddin, who hit 15 boundaries in five hours during his fifth first-class hundred, was the last man to be dismissed, just five overs before close of play.

Mushfiqur Rahman, who lost his father on Tuesday, returned to the side and took 2-58. Farhad Hossain chipped in with two wickets including the scalp of Nazimuddin.

DHAKA-KHULNA
Kamrul Islam dazzled in a 147 not out off 206 balls as Dhaka consolidated their position after being put into bat at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium. The number three batsman hit 27 fours and one six in just four and a half hours. Opener Uttam Sarkar was more entertaining in a run-a-ball 71, studded with 11 fours and two sixes.

BARISAL-SYLHET
New ball bowler Arafat Salahuddin

captured four wickets for 47 to help Barisal dismiss Sylhet for 194 in the first innings. The home side wiped out 94 of those runs with Hannan Sarkar scoring 59 off 75 deliveries. Imran Ahmed (25) and Mohammed Shahin (9) were at the crease at stumps.

Golam Mabud topscored 65 and Tapash Baisya made 41 to help inserted Sylhet recover from a precarious 24-4 at one stage.

SCORES IN BRIEF
CHITTAGONG: First innings 257-6 in 90 overs (Nafees 26, Nazim 104, Ehsanul 18, Faisal 66, Dhiman 18, Shuvo 1-57, Farhad 2-41).

DHAKA: First innings 316-6 in 90 overs (Uttam 71, Anwar 15, Kamrul 147 batting, Mehrab 12, Riyad 37, Rubel 10 batting, Zia 1-50, Sadik 2-82, Sadat 1-72, Jamal 1-24).

SYLHET: First innings 194 all out in 55.1 overs (Mabud 65, Tapash 41, Mortuza 15, Enamul 32, Nabil 14, Sonnet 1-17, Salahuddin 4-47, Hannan 1-32, Nadif 2-27, Marshall 1-23).

BARISAL: First innings 94-1 in 34 overs (Imran 25 batting, Hannan 59, Shahin 9 batting, Enamul 1-13).

First Test evenly poised

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER
AFP, Cape Town

Australia were in a strong position despite a fightback by South Africa's bowlers on the second day of the first Test at Newlands on Friday.

Australia were 273 for six at tea, a lead of 68, in reply to South Africa's first innings total of 205.

Matthew Hayden (94) and captain Ricky Ponting (74) put Australia in command with a second wicket stand of 154 but Ponting's dismissal just before lunch started a minor slide in which four wickets fell for 61 runs.

Hayden and Ponting took the total from an overnight 63 for one with a mixture of watchful defence, luck and some aggressive batting once had they drawn the sting from the bowlers.

They posted a century partnership off 174 balls but needed only another 60 deliveries to add another 50.

Ponting fell when he drove Jacques Kallis to Andrew Hall at short cover after facing 112 balls and hitting eight fours and a six.

Hayden, having survived some anxious moments with three edged strokes which took him from 28 to 37, was on course for a century until he top-edged a pull against Makhaya Ntini and was caught by Jacques Rudolph, running in from deep midwicket. He had faced 173 balls and hit 14 fours and a six.

The innings lost momentum as Michael Hussey and Damien Martyn were caught behind off Hall and Kallis respectively, bringing the hard-hitting Andrew Symonds and Adam Gilchrist together.

They added 36 in just 4.4 overs before Gilchrist slashed at Kallis and was caught by South African captain Graeme Smith at first slip for 12.

Symonds, who hit two sixes in an over off left-arm spinner Nicky Boje, was on 41 not out at tea.

Kallis, who did not bowl until the 41st over, had taken three for 39.

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What to WATCH

DD National
India vs England
3rd Test, Day One
Live at 10:30 am

ESPN
South Africa vs Australia
1st Test, Day Three
Live at 2:30 pm

English Premier Football League
Birmingham City vs Tottenham Hotspur
Live at 11:10 pm

STAR Sports
New Zealand vs West Indies
2nd Test, Day Two
Live at 3:30 am (Saturday)

English Premier Football League
Everton vs Aston Villa
Live at 6:40 pm

English Premier Football League
West Bromwich vs Man United
Live at 8:55 pm

DAY'S EVENT

7th National Cricket League
Four-Day Matches (Day Two)
Dhaka vs Khulna
Venue: Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium
Chittagong vs Rajshahi
Venue: BKSIP-2
Sylhet vs Barisal
Venue: Barisal Divisional Stadium