



Despite a team-high 53-ball 65 from Bangladesh opener Tamim Iqbal during yesterday's second T20I against Pakistan in Lahore, his overall defensive approach proved wanting and perfectly encapsulated the Tigers' cautious demeanour, which is not how T20 matches are meant to be played.

PHOTO: BCB

'Teammates make it easy'

SPORTS REPORTER



Following a disappointing run in the recent past in T20Is during which they lost back-to-back series against Australia and Sri Lanka, Pakistan finally managed to make a comeback as the home side clinched the three match T20I series against Bangladesh 2-0 with a game in hand.

Pakistan were clinical in the first two T20Is, managing to restrict Bangladesh to small totals. In the second game yesterday, Bangladesh could only score 136 for six, paving the way for Pakistan to win by a convincing nine-wicket margin.

Skipper Babar Azam, who struck an unbeaten 66 alongside Mohammad Hafeez's unbeaten 67, was relieved to finally return to winning ways.

According to Babar, the mixture of youth and experience worked well for his team.

"Obviously, we needed to win this series to gel as a unit as it came after losing back-to-back series. So, we tried to have such [youth and experience] combination and eventually it worked well for us," Babar told reporters after the match.

When asked if he was feeling the pressure of the captaincy, which he got before the start of this series, the 25-year-old complimented his teammates for making the job easy.

"Obviously, I am grateful to the Almighty as we managed to win the series. I don't feel any pressure as my teammates support me a lot and whatever roles they are given, they try to fulfil that," he said.

The stylish batsman also praised his bowlers who helped restrict Bangladesh to small totals in both games.

'Long way to go to challenge Pak'

SPORTS REPORTER



Much like in the first T20I the Bangladesh batting department's failures made the difference as the Tigers were unable to put up a fight and ended up losing the second game comprehensive by nine wickets to lose the three-match series 2-0 yesterday.

With this series in Pakistan seen as the start of the 'Tigers' preparations for the T20 World Cup in Australia in October this year, it seemed that the Bangladesh think tank were nowhere near identifying a good composition.

The approach from the batsmen, especially experienced opener Tamim Iqbal, raised a lot of questions despite the left-hander top-scoring with a 53-ball 65 as Bangladesh posted a mediocre 136 for six, the second-lowest at the Gaddafi Stadium.

In the five-wicket loss in the first T20I, the Tigers posted 141 for five and played out 45 dot balls. Things did not improve in the second game as the Tigers failed to score off 47 deliveries. Both games also saw an overly conservative approach in the six Powerplay overs, with Bangladesh adding 35 without loss in the first match and 33 for two yesterday.

Russell Domingo was asked whether he was happy with the approach from the openers, especially Tamim who scored 39 off 35 in the first game, and the South African tried to defend the left-hander but also said that there was definitely some work to be done.

"Look, it's a challenge as it's my first tour with Tamim and I thought he has shown improvement in both innings. In the first game I thought we were 68 without loss after 10, which

SCORES IN BRIEF

BANGLADESH: 136-6 in 20 overs (Tamim 65, Afif 21, Mahmudullah 12; Afridi 1-22, Hasnain 2-22, Rauf 1-27)

PAKISTAN: 137-1 in 16.4 overs (Babar 66 not out, Hafeez 67 not out; Shafiq 1-27)

Result: Pakistan won by nine wickets.

Player-of-the-match: Babar Azam.



So, there is work to be done for all of us in that particular spot and with him [Tamim] it's my first time so we have to see how it goes by in the T20 business.

RUSSELL DOMINGO
BANGLADESH COACH

was okay. Today we just kept losing wickets at the wrong time so it was difficult for him to open up the game because the batters were batting with him were also scoring at a run a ball.

"So, there is work to be done for all of us in that particular spot and with him [Tamim] it's my first time so we have to see how it goes by in the T20 business. We have all got things we can improve and the discussion with him needs to be to get forward and hope it take his game forward to the next level, but there is work to be done in this department as well," Domingo told reporters after the defeat.

According to the 45-year-old, the difference in experience between Pakistan and Bangladesh has been huge and the Tigers need to catch up to their opponents in terms of skills.

"The disappointment today [Saturday] was that I thought we challenged them [Pakistan] much more in the first game. Not an easy pitch to bat on as the average score was somewhere near 150-155. First game, we were maybe 15

runs short and today 25 runs short, but that's why they are ranked number one and we are ranked number nine. At the moment there is a huge difference between the two sides in terms of experience and skill and I think we have a long way to go to catch them," he said.

The head coach was also looking forward to the youngsters stepping up, saying that the likes of the experienced Shakib Al Hasan and Mushfiqur Rahim will not be available forever.



Pakistan openers Babar Azam (R) and Mohammad Hafeez celebrate after romping to a nine-wicket win in the second T20I against Bangladesh at the Gaddafi Stadium in Lahore yesterday.

PHOTO: COLLECTED



Intellectually challenged children from Beautiful Mind School compete for candy in a game organised at a sports day at the Friends Club ground in Uttara yesterday.

Haaland hits two more

AFP, Berlin



Teenager Erling Braut Haaland scored twice more off the bench on Friday as Borussia Dortmund moved up to third in the Bundesliga with a 5-1 thumping of Cologne.

Having claimed a hattrick as a replacement on his Dortmund debut last Saturday to inspire a 5-3 win away at Augsburg, Haaland, 19, again showed clinical finishing.

With his team 3-1 up, Haaland came on for his first home appearance with an hour gone and 11 minutes later was on the scoresheet before an 87th-minute second.

Haaland now has 33 goals in 24 games

I think it's a pity that Erling (Haaland) is fading so quickly. First three goals, now only two. Who knows where the road will lead.

ROMAN BURKI
DORTMUND GOALKEEPER

this season having netted 28 times for Salzburg before Dortmund snapped him up for 20 million euros last month.

"He's living his dream right now, we don't want to wake him up," joked Dortmund's sports director Michael Zorc.

Wood puts England in command

AFP, Johannesburg



Mark Wood starred as England took a huge stride towards securing a series win when they dominated the second day of the fourth and final Test against South Africa at the Wanderers Stadium on Saturday.

England posted a first innings total of 400 before reducing South Africa to 88 for six by the close.

Two century partnerships and a boisterous last-wicket stand of 82 took England to a total which almost certainly put the match beyond the reach of South Africa, who need a win to level the series.

Then it was the turn of the bowlers, led by Wood, as England pushed for a third successive win in a series which they lead 2-1.

South Africa finished the day 312 runs adrift, with Quinton de Kock seeking to give the innings some respectability on Sunday.

Wood made the first breakthrough when he had Pieter Malan caught behind for 15. He followed up with the wicket of the recalled Temba Bavuma, then finished the day on a high when nightwatchman Anrich Nortje was caught at gully in the last over of the day. He had figures of three for 21. Sam Curran, Ben Stokes and Chris Woakes picked up a wicket each.

England's total was built around three big partnerships. The first two, 107 for the first wicket between Zak Crawley and Dom Sibley and 101 for the fifth wicket between captain Joe Root and Ollie Pope, were

compiled by recognised batsmen.

The last wicket stand probably hurt South Africa the most. Wood and Stuart Broad, batting at 10 and 11, hit seven sixes between them and put on 82 off only 50 balls.

The Wood-Broad stand was devastating as England turned a respectable total into one which by the end of the day looked too big for the hosts, who have yet to make 300 in an innings in the series.

South Africa's bowling, with the exception of Nortje, was largely toothless. Nortje bowled tirelessly at

high pace and took five for 110, his first five-wicket haul in Test cricket.

Nortje dismissed both Pope for 56 and Root for 59 after the pair had dominated the first hour of play, adding 66 runs to England's overnight total of 192 for four.

Thanks largely to Nortje, England were reduced to 318 for nine. Then came 41 minutes of mayhem as Wood and Broad indulged themselves against mediocre bowling.

Captain Faf du Plessis resorted to placing most of his fielders on the

boundary but Wood (35 not out) and Broad (43) either hit over them or found the gaps.

In contrast, South African openers Dean Elgar and Malan could only score 11 runs in 12 overs before tea as they made a cautious start to their innings.

SCORES-IN-BRIEF

ENGLAND: First innings 400 all out (Crawley 66, Root 59, Pope 56, Wood 35 not out; Nortje 5-110)
SOUTH AFRICA: 88 for six (Elgar 26, De Kock 32 not out; Wood 3-21, Curran 1-11)



Following his heroics with the bat, England pacer Mark Wood celebrates the dismissal of South Africa's Pieter Malan on the second day of the final Test at Wanderers yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS