



Bangladesh openers Liton Das (L) and Tamim Iqbal pummeled Zimbabwe in the third and final ODI yesterday with a historic 292-run partnership for the opening wicket, the most for any wicket in Bangladesh history, at the Sylhet International Cricket Stadium.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

## Liton, Tamim create history

SPORTS REPORTER from Sylhet

There were records galore for Bangladesh as openers Tamim Iqbal and Liton Das whipped up a storm with twin tons at the Sylhet International Cricket Stadium in the third and final against Zimbabwe ODI yesterday.

The hosts were looking for a perfect finish with a whitewash that would give their captain, Mashrafe Bin Mortaza, a memorable send-off. And ever since Zimbabwe skipper Sean Williams surprisingly opted to field on a rather flat track, Tamim and especially Liton took a toll on the visiting bowlers and ensured the crowd stayed on their feet throughout Bangladesh's innings.

Tamim and Liton broke almost all the batting records for Bangladesh as the duo posted 292 of Bangladesh's 322 runs for the first wicket -- the 'Tigers' best opening stand and the highest partnership for any wicket in ODIs.

Before rain interrupted the game for more than two-and-a-half hours, Liton and Tamim broke Bangladesh's 21-year-old record ODI opening stand of 170 runs between Shahrir Hossain and

Mehrab Hossain.

Liton, who struck his third ODI century and his second in the series after a magnificent 126 in the first ODI, went on to grab Bangladesh's highest individual ODI score. He surpassed Tamim Iqbal's 158 just one game after it was recorded.

Liton was eventually dismissed after a magnificent 176 off 142

already become the third-best opening-wicket partnership and the sixth-best in terms of runs for any wicket in one-day cricket history.

West Indies batsmen John Campbell and Shai Hope hold the record partnership for the opening wicket with their 365-run stand against Ireland in 2019, followed by the 304-run stand between

Riyad's 224-run stand in the 2017 Champions Trophy against New Zealand in Cardiff.

Liton did find slices of luck during his masterclass, being dropped three times after reaching his century as some sloppy fielding from the visitors saw him survive scares on 102, 122 and 144.

The best part of the partnership was how Tamim complemented Liton, even congratulating him with a hug when the right-hander went past 158 with a boundary.

Liton now has two centuries in the past three matches while Tamim got a second consecutive century in the format for the second time in his career and extended his Bangladesh record tally of ODI centuries to 13.

Tamim had previously gotten back-to-back hundreds against Pakistan in Dhaka in April 2015, scoring 132 in the first ODI and an unbeaten 116 in the second.

From the way Liton was taking on the Zimbabwe attack, it looked at one point that the wicketkeeper-batsman could well register the first ever ODI double hundred for the Tigers. That did not happen in the end and it seemed that Tamim was the most disappointed after Liton's dismissal.

TOP FIVE PARTNERSHIPS			
PARTNERS	RUNS	WKT	OPPOSITION
Tamim Iqbal, Liton Das	292	1st	Zimbabwe
Shakib Al Hasan, Mahmudullah	224	5th	New Zealand
Imrul Kayes, Soumya Sarkar	220	2nd	Zimbabwe
Tamim Iqbal, Shakib Al Hasan	207	2nd	West Indies
Shakib Al Hasan, Liton Das	189*	4th	West Indies

balls, smiting a record eight sixes, the most by a Bangladeshi batsman in an ODI innings.

At the other end, Tamim joined the party and remained unbeaten for a 109-ball 128.

The hurricane 292-run stand came to an end with Liton's departure, but by then it had

Imam-ul-Haq and Fakhar Zaman for Pakistan against Zimbabwe in 2018.

During the course of their whirlwind knocks, Tamim and Liton also surpassed the highest partnership for any wicket for Bangladesh, eclipsing Shakib Al Hasan and Mahmudullah

## NUMBERS GAME

**1** The 292-run opening stand between Tamim Iqbal and Liton Das yesterday was Bangladesh's biggest partnership for any wicket, comfortably beating Mahmudullah Riyad and Shakib Al Hasan's 224-run fifth-wicket stand against New Zealand in the 2017 ICC Champions Trophy.

**1** Liton's 176 is the highest score by Bangladesh in ODIs, beating the 158 scored by Tamim in the second ODI. His third century puts him level with Mahmudullah at joint-fifth in Bangladesh's list of century-scorers.

**3** It was the third-highest opening stand in ODI history, coming in behind John Campbell and Shai Hope's 365-run partnership against Ireland in 2019 and the 304 put on by Pakistan openers Imam-ul-Haq and Fakhar Zaman against Zimbabwe in 2018.

**5** Partnerships in ODI cricket history that were bigger than the Tamim-Liton stand. The 372-run second-wicket stand between West Indies' Chris Gayle and Marlon Samuels, also against Zimbabwe, in 2015 tops the list.

**6** 322 for three is Bangladesh's sixth-highest total in ODI cricket, but as it was a 43-over match because of a rain interruption, the Tigers would have easily surpassed their highest total of 333 for eight -- scored during last year's World Cup match against Australia -- had it been a 50-over game.

## BD-ZIM SCOREBOARD

BANGLADESH R/B 4s/6s

Tamim not out 128/109 7/6

Liton c Raza b Mumba 176/143 16/8

Mahmudullah lbw

b Mumba 1/4 0/0

Afif c Williams b Mumba 7/4 1/0

Extras: (lb-1, nb-2, w-5) 8

Total: (For 3 wkts in

43 overs) 322

Did not bat: Mohammad Naim, Mo-

hammad Mithun, Mehdi Hasan Miraz,

Mashrafe Bin Mortaza (c), Taijul Islam,

Mohammad Saifuddin, Mustafizur

Rahman

Fall of wickets: 1-292, 2-312, 3-322.

**Bowler** O M R W

Mumba 8 0 69 3

Tshuma 6 1 48 0

Raza 7 0 64 0

Madhevere 5 0 29 0

Tiripano 8 0 65 0

Williams 9 1 46 0

**ZIMBABWE:** Tinashe Kamunhu-

kamwe, Regis Chakabva, Brendan

Taylor, Sean Williams (capt), Wesley

Madhevere, Sikandar Raza, Richmond

Mutumbam, Tinotenda Mutumbodzi,

Donald Tiripano, Charlton Tshuma, Carl

Mumba

**Umpires:** Sharfuddoula (BAN), Kumar

Dharmasena (SRI),

**TV Umpires:** Paul Reiffel (AUS)

**Match Referee:** Jeff Crowe (NZ)



Supporters turned out with numerous placards to give Bangladesh ODI captain Mashrafe Bin Mortaza a fitting farewell, but this simple one perhaps best captured the feelings of the nation on the 36-year-old's final time leading the team out. PHOTO: STAR

## 'O Captain! Our Captain!'

Sylhet bids adieu to captain Mashrafe in grand style

SPORTS REPORTER from Sylhet



After low

attendance in

the first two ODIs,

the stands at

Sylhet were packed for the final

game yesterday as fans flooded in

to give a fitting farewell to captain

Mashrafe Bin Mortaza.

The holiday on Friday ensured

that every corner of the stadium was

packed for the last time the nation

would witness Bangladesh's most

successful ODI skipper in action.

A crowd started gathering outside

hours before the game to collect

tickets and watch the historic match.

Many had come from all parts of the

country to give a memorable send-off to 'Captain Fantastic'.



His teammates would also be looking to make the occasion more special with a win in the third ODI, which would be Mashrafe's 50th win as captain in the format.

"It is undoubtedly a huge moment for all Bangladesh fans because this is the last game for our captain, that too in our own city. I was unable to make it for the first two games but I had made up my

mind to watch the third game only because of Mashrafe," Mohammad Shahin a service holder, told The Daily Star yesterday.

Mashrafe shocked everyone on Thursday by declaring his decision to step down as captain after the third ODI, finally ending the saga that started following Bangladesh and Mashrafe's below-par performance in the 2019 World Cup.

Despite that, his fanbase never wavered. It has been hard for them to accept that their hero will not be in action again as national captain.

"You will be missed" and 'O Captain, our Captain' were some of the more common banners and the crowd even patiently withstood the pouring rain, which stopped play for more than two hours.

Mashrafe's close friends and younger brother, Morsalin Bin Mortaza, were also present.

"The fans expect us to win every game and hopefully the next captain can motivate the team to do well. I love this game and the supporters. They support us if we win or lose and that's been my motivation," Mashrafe said during the toss.