

## Just a tribute

RABEED IMAM

It could not have happened to a better person any way you look at it. The fact that Mohammad Rafique became the first Bangladeshi bowler to take 50 Test wickets is a tribute to all those who can dare to dream and can remain down to earth while that dream is being unfolded.

It was also a glorious riposte to every crisis the 34-year-old has been through in a 13-Test career mostly stemming from misunderstanding.

Indeed Rafique had paid the price a number of times for what has been often interpreted as brashness and arrogance although it might have been just an honest outpouring of emotion from a man who has been brought up in a lifestyle and social circumstances, which few other top cricketers past or present can properly relate to.

He could and should have played in all of Bangladesh's 31 Tests to date. Instead, he was forgotten after the inaugural game against India in 2000 and was being branded a one-day specialist.

He was thought of as a poor competitor to fellow left-armed Enamul Haque Moni in the Test race, a gross misconception about which he could do nothing about until given another go.

He was sacrificed for discipline in Zimbabwe and was sent back home. His explanations for what-ever happened was never taken seriously because he was Rafique.

On the second day of the first Test against New Zealand, he was taken aback when journalists wanted to talk to him. "What have I done?" was his first reaction.

When he got that magnificent hundred batting at number nine against the West Indies in St. Lucia, the obvious interest of the media was to get his instant feeling.

"It just happened by fluke," was the stunning reply when translated into English from his unique Dhakaia accent.

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## Did U Know?

Sri Lanka captain Marvan Atapattu is the third genuine batsman to have recorded 20 or more ducks. Steve Waugh with 22 ducks in 260 innings, heads the table, followed by Mike Atherton (E) -- 20 in 212 innings and Atapattu -- 20 in 134 innings.



### Wasim Akram

(Legendary Pakistani fast bowler) "Hatrick is a hatrick especially on this kind of wicket where there is little or no assistance for a seamer. But the batsman should have been more careful not to give him such an easy wicket."



#### ESPN

Bangladesh vs New Zealand  
First Test, Day Four  
Live at 9:20  
Sportscentre

Live at 8:30 pm

#### TEN Sports

Pakistan vs Sri Lanka  
First Test, Day Three  
Live at 10:45 am

#### STAR Sports

Madrid Tennis Masters Series  
Live at 5:45 pm  
Sportsline

Live at 8:00 pm

Madrid Tennis Masters Series  
Live at 5:45 pm



PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

50-UP RAFIQUE: Mohammad Rafique feels over the moon after taking his sixth wicket by clean bowling New Zealand's Paul Wiseman on the third day of the first Test at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

# Pakistan gain slim lead



AFP, Faisalabad

Sri Lanka fought back with seven wickets in the last two sessions to restrict Pakistan's first innings lead on the second day of the first Test on Thursday.

At the close Pakistan had reached 256-8, just 13 ahead, with tail-enders Mohammad Sami on two and Shoaib Akhtar on six.

Earlier in the day Sri Lankan middle-order batsman Thilan Samaraweera notched a diligent 100 to guide his team to 243 before Pakistan's express paceman Shoaib Akhtar mopped up the tail to end with figures of 5-60.

The home team got off to a brisk start to reach 28 before opener Imran Farhat pulled Lasith Malinga into the hands of Jehan Mubarak after scoring 11.

Farhat's opening partner Yasir Hameed took Pakistan to 85-1 by lunch with a fluent half-century. But the tourists struck back by taking three wickets in the space of 40 runs.

Paceman Dilhara Fernando dismissed Asim Kamal for 17 after he edged a wide delivery to slip and

then had the threatening Hameed caught by a diving Jehan Mubarak off a miscued hook for 58.

Hameed hit ten boundaries in his fourth Test half-century and added 66 for the second wicket with Asim Kamal.

Following Fernando's double strike, left-armed Rangana Herath had Yousuf Youhana caught behind for 17 to leave the home team on 134-4.

Pakistan reached tea at 185-4 and once again looked set for a good lead, with skipper Inzamamul Haq and Shoaib Malik seemingly well set.

But in the third over after tea, Inzamam was caught at mid-on off a miscued sweep of Herath for 32 and with his departure Pakistan's hopes of a big lead receded.

Malik shared a 54-run stand with Inzamam and passed his previous Test best of 47 made against South Africa in Lahore last year. One run later he was carelessly run out, failing to beat Chaminda Vaas' direct throw from mid-on.

Moin Khan was bowled by Sanath Jayasuriya for five before Abdul Razzaq hit three boundaries and a six.

But with three overs to stumps Razzaq also fell, to a slip catch off

Vaas, after making 39.

Earlier Sri Lanka, resuming on 233-7, folded inside 3.4 overs with the addition of ten runs with Akhtar taking two of the three wickets.

Samaraweera drove the first ball of Akhtar's eventful first over of the day to the covers for three to reach a deserving fourth Test hundred after a resolute stay of 327 minutes at the crease, in which he hit ten boundaries.

But four balls later he miscued a hook off a rising Akhtar delivery straight into the hands of square leg fielder Mohammad Sami without adding to his total.

Akhtar removed Dilhara Fernando with the third delivery of the second new ball for nought to complete his ninth five-wicket haul in 33 Tests.

Sami then wrapped up the innings when he bowled Malinga for one to finish with 4-71.

#### SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at stumps on the second day of the first Test between Pakistan and Sri Lanka at the Iqbal Stadium in Faisalabad on Thursday:

**SRI LANKA:** First innings (over-night 233-7)

Atapattu lbw b Akhtar 0

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## Corporate cricket Araf, Biman keep winning

SPORTS REPORTER

Araf Apparels and Biman Bangladesh maintained their winning runs in the GrameenPhone 2nd Corporate Cricket League when the title contenders recorded their third consecutive victories in the Twenty20 competition yesterday. Defending champions Araf stormed to 84-1 to inflict a nine-wicket defeat on winless MM Ispahani Limited (83 all out) at BKSP ground in Savar.

Robintex (117-6) edged Epyllion Group (108) by nine runs in a battle of newcomers at the same venue. It was Robintex's first win after two losses.

Biman shot out Gazi Tank for a paltry 28 in their ten-wicket win at the BKSP ground. The winners needed just 6.4 overs to reach the target.

In other third round matches also at BKSP, Beximco (115) defeated GrameenPhone (61) by 54 runs, CityCell (135-3) beat Acme Laboratories (132-6) by seven wickets and Aktel (141-7) beat ParTex Group (140-8) by three wickets.

### BANGLADESH-NZ SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at stumps on the third day of the opening Test between Bangladesh and New Zealand at the Bangabandhu National Stadium in Dhaka on Thursday:

**BANGLADESH:** First innings 177 (Ashraf 67, Saleh 41, Mashud 23, Manzarul 16; Franklin 5-28, Oram 3-36, Vettori 2-36)

**NEW ZEALAND:** First innings (overnight 207-5)

Richardson c Mashud b Rafique 15  
Sinclair lbw b Rafique 76  
Fleming c Mashud b Manzarul 29  
Styris c Saleh b Manzarul 2  
Astle c Manzarul b Rafique 11  
Oram c Manzarul b Rafique 23  
McCullum c Hannan b Rafique 143  
Vettori c Iqbal b Manzarul 23  
Franklin c Saleh b Baisya 23  
Wiseman b Rafique 28  
Butler not out 15  
Extras: (nb-2, lb-5, w-4, b-3) 14  
Total: (All out in 145.1 overs) 402  
Fall of wickets: 1-34, 2-97, 3-99, 4-122, 5-139, 6-223, 7-294, 8-351, 9-371

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Baisya	28	4	112	1
Aziz	12	1	59	0
Rafique	59.1	18	122	6
Manzarul	42	12	84	3
Saleh	1	0	4	0
Kapali	2	0	6	0
Ashraf	1	0	7	0

**BANGLADESH:** Second innings  
Iqbal not out 24  
Omar c McCullum b Vettori 14  
Hannan c and b Vettori 1  
Saleh not out 2  
Extras: (b-1, nb-1) 2  
Total: (For 2 wks in 21 overs) 41

Fall of wickets: 1-27, 2-33  
To bat: Ashraf, Kapali, Mashud, Manzarul, Rafique, Baisya, Aziz

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Oram	5	2	6	0
Franklin	5	1	14	0
Butler	4	1	8	0
Vettori	5	3	4	2
Wiseman	2	0	8	0



PHOTO: STAR

Action from the Club Cup hockey tournament clash between Mohammedan Sporting Club and Wari Club at the Maulana Bhasani National Stadium yesterday.

# Savouring the moment

AL MUSSABIR SADI



Bangladesh vs. New Zealand

The third day of the first Test was not a spectator's delight. But it will be remembered

for two individuals.

The home side might have been on the receiving end throughout the day at the hands of New Zealand, still there was time for ace left-arm spinner Mohammad Rafique to achieve a landmark that no bowler of the country has yet to reach.

The feisty 34-year-old playing in his 13th match claimed 50 Test wickets when he dismissed New Zealand's Jacob Oram in the morning.

But lunch and beyond belonged to New Zealand wicketkeeper Brendon McCullum, who scored his maiden Test century. The right-hander, who narrowly fell four runs short of the magical three-figure mark in England, scored an enterprising 143 in only his seventh Test appearance.

But Rafique's feat was something to celebrate for the home side.

The paceman-turned-left-arm spinner was over the moon once Oram was deceived by a classical

orthodox delivery that turned sharply and found the edge before Manzarul Islam took a smart catch at slip. No sooner had Rafiq got Oram he did a dance familiar for any African.

"I learned it (the dance) from Steve Tikolo when he was playing for Mohammedan in the Dhaka Premier League. We used to dance in the dressing room. It's an African dance. I enjoyed it that time and I was so excited that I decided to express my joy this way," Rafique told after the day's play.

Starting the day with three wickets Rafique also wrapped up the Black Caps' innings to finish with 6-122, his fourth five-wicket haul.

"I'm proud of it. I knew I would be successful on this pitch because it suits my bowling. I've always tried to maintain a good line and length. I knew it would give me wickets in the end," said Rafique, who bowled tirelessly for 59.1 overs, nearly half of what Bangladesh bowled in the New Zealand innings.

Rafique also took his first six wickets against South Africa last year on this very ground, which kick started his career after being branded as a one-day bowler. His 6-77 against the Proteas still remains the best bowling figures by any

Bangladeshi.

"We should have dismissed McCullum earlier. He gave a few chances but we could not take those. It was sheer luck that he survived that long," said Rafique.

But 23-year-old McCullum looked at his innings differently.

"I had a target before the series and I'm happy to achieve it in a difficult situation. It was very important time when I came to bat. We needed a partnership and I think we helped ourselves to a commanding position," said the Kiwi stumper.

"Getting a Test century is always a dream for any batsman but unfortunately I missed it narrowly in England on our last tour. It is great that I made a Test century here in my seventh Test match but it was possible to convert it into a double," said the young batsman, who is looking to cement his position in the team.

McCullum believed that sometimes a top-order collapse creates an opportunity for the lower half to contribute.

"The situation was ideal to prove my worth. When I came to the crease our team was struggling at 1 3 9 - 5 . I t

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BISHWAJIT ROY

Sometimes looks can be deceiving. After watching Paul Piente, an Australian gentleman with a long beard, one can be pardoned for seeing the ghost of legendary English cricketer WG Grace.

It certainly could have not been Grace, who has passed away a long time ago. But seeing Paul Piente, who was one of the few foreign spectators sitting in the corridor just in front of the press box during the third day of the first Test between Bangladesh and New Zealand, one could easily have mistaken him as Grace.

The 54-year-old Australian, who arrived in Dhaka yesterday morning to mark his first tour in this part of the world, rushed to the Bangabandhu National Stadium no sooner had he learned that a cricket match was going on there.

"As a traveller, I'm always attracted by the masses and I thought that the stadium would be a great place to talk to people," said Piente, who has been running a live-house (Tourist Park) in Melbourne for the last 17 years.

"I work nine months and for the remaining three months I spend my time travelling to various countries. And it was my long desire to visit Bangladesh because I've heard a lot about this country," said Piente, who has not shaved his beard since he was 19.

A passionate cricket fan Piente however dislike the present Australian team because of their on-field attitude.

"No doubt Australia is an invincible cricket team but I hate their ugly on-field aggressiveness. I don't like anything rude in sports. I also don't like the Americans for a similar aggressive attitude and that's why I have never gone to the States," said Piente, who was a schoolteacher in his early life.

#### OF AN OVERZEALOUS VENUE MANAGER

The reporters have never been in the good books of certain Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) officials. While one reporter of a newspaper was yet to be granted a proper entry pass for no apparent reason, others suffered a different kind of embarrassment after the third day's play ended at the Bangabandhu National Stadium.

Some reporters tried to enter 'the



PHOTO: STAR

CAN HE LIVE UPTO HIS BILLING? Bangladesh opener Nafees Iqbal, who was 24 not out last night, works the ball on the on-side during the Tigers' second innings against the Kiwis yesterday.