



HOW MANY MORE TIMES BEFORE THIS SCENE IS REVERSED? (L) A dejected Bangladesh team looks on as New Zealand captain Stephen Fleming (R) poses with the Pan Pacific Sonargaon Test series trophy at the MA Aziz Stadium in Chittagong yesterday.

Mashud hits where it hurts

SHAHIDUL ISLAM, Chittagong

Pan Pacific Sonargaon Test Series 2004
Bangladesh vs. New Zealand

St and i Bangladesh captain Khaled Mashud said that he was not ready to cop the flak after yet another humiliating defeat against New Zealand at the MA Aziz Stadium yesterday.

The Bangladesh wicketkeeper, deputising for injured Habibul Bashar, rather blamed the poor domestic infrastructure for the repeated failures of the cricketers to cope with the pressure and demand of international cricket.

Speaking at a crowded press conference after Bangladesh lost the second Test and final Test by an innings and 101 runs on the fourth morning, Mashud said unless the players got enough chances to hone their skills in domestic competitions, they could not do well straight away in Test cricket.

"Look at Hannan Sarker. He

was out of the team for a couple of months after the West Indies tour. But did he get enough match practice during that break to improve his skills and confidence? So how can you expect good batting from someone who was brought back into the side without playing in between," said Mashud after the series whitewash against the Black Caps.

Stephen Fleming's side had earlier won the first Test at Dhaka by an innings and 99 runs.

The 29-year-old stumper, who a scored half-century in the second innings at Chittagong, also hit back at the critics saying that the national cricketers are always committed to play to the best of their abilities.

"If a player does not have a record of scoring fifties, centuries or double hundreds in the domestic scene, how can one expect him to achieve that mark in the more demanding five-day against quality

opponent?" questioned the man from Rajshahi.

Mashud however said that his batsmen should have done better in the first innings, which folded at 182 after the Kiwis posted a massive 545.

Coach Dav Whatmore on the other hand lamented that his boys had failed to take the positives from the last few away series, where they performed well.

"It was probably a reminder that to do well in Test cricket, you have to do better in the first innings. The wickets in Dhaka and Chittagong were different. And it becomes a lot harder to get back into the game after a team makes 545 runs. But yes, it was probably the same lesson that we learned on some other occasions," said the 50-year-old Australian.

Whatmore however highly praised Mohammad Rafique.

"He's world class." Fleming will remember the two

match series for crossing some personal landmark. But the elegant left-hander was surprised the way the Tests ended up.

"I was a little bit disappointed because I thought Bangladesh would be more competitive in their own backyard. I thought that they could use the conditions better than us. We also expected a little bit more from the Bangladesh batters since they knew the condition. I also did not see them playing with any strategy against our spin attack," said Fleming who scored a magnificent double hundred in the second Test.

"It's a memorable tour for me and I won't forget it," said Fleming, who also paid tribute to man-of-the-series left-arm spinner Daniel Vettori.

"He was rewarded for his patience and hard work for months," said the Kiwi captain about his slow bowler, who took 12 wickets in the second Test.

Final frontier falls

Australia clinch series

AFP, Nagpur



World champions Australia conquered the final frontier here on Friday when they won their first series on Indian soil in 35 years with a 342-run rout in the third Test here.

India, needing to bat out

five sessions for a draw after being set an improbable victory target of 543, were shot out for 200 shortly before stumps on the fourth day.

Jason Gillespie picked up 4-24 for a match haul of nine wickets and Glenn McGrath, Michael Kasprowicz and Shane Warne took two each to hand India their worst Test defeat in terms of runs.

India's previous low was the 329-run loss to Hansie Cronje's South Africa at the Eden Gardens in 1996.

India's top batsmen submitted meekly to the fire-up rivals, being reduced to 37-5 by the 16th over before the lower order put up a brave resistance to add 163 runs.

Virender Sehwag and Parthiv Patel put on 65 for the sixth wicket and Ajit Agarkar (44 not out) and Zaheer Khan (25) delayed the inevitable by adding 52 for the last wicket.

Sehwag, dropped by Justin Langer in the slips before he had scored, made 58, while Patel chipped in with a gutsy 32.

India's late charge finally ended when Zaheer holed out in the deep off Warne to leave the Australians celebrating in mid-pitch.

Australia, who considered India the final frontier for their world-beating side after failing to win a series here since 1969, took a decisive 2-0 lead in the four-match rubber with the emphatic win.

The tourists won the first Test in Bangalore by 217 runs while the second in Madras was drawn after the fifth day's play was washed out.

The fourth and final Test begins at the Wankhede stadium in

Bombay on Wednesday.

Gillespie, who took five wickets in the first innings, began the destruction when he uprooted Akash Chopra's middle stump and stand-in captain Rahul Dravid's leg stump to reduce India to 9-2 by the sixth over.

Sachin Tendulkar, who made eight in the first innings on his return to international cricket after a tennis elbow injury, was snapped up by McGrath for two.

Tendulkar, still battling for form after a three-month lay-off, fended at a short ball and was caught by

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PHOTO: AFP

NOW WE'VE DONE EVERYTHING! An exultant Australian captain Adam Gilchrist and his mates walk off the field after beating India in the third Test

JFA Cup

Narsinghdi ride on Mobarak

SPORTS REPORTER

Mobarak scored a superb solo goal and set the other for Arif to help Narsinghdi reach the final of the JFA Cup under-16 football tournament with a 2-0 win over Barguna yesterday.

Mobarak dribbled past three defenders to break the deadlock after 37 minutes in the first semifinal at the Birsreshtha Shaheed Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur.

Narsinghdi dominated the show and striker Mobarak took a ball from the midfield to find unmarked Arif who sealed the victory with an angular shot in the 67th minute.

The second semifinal between Feni and Rajshahi will be held today at the same venue. The final is slated for November 1.

BANGLADESH-NZ SCOREBOARD

Final scoreboard on the fourth day of the second and final Test between Bangladesh and New Zealand at the MA Aziz Stadium in Chittagong on Friday:

NEW ZEALAND: First innings 545 for 6 declared (Fleming 202, Styris 89, Marshall 69; Rafique 3-130)

BANGLADESH: First innings 182 (Javed 58, Rafique 32; Vettori 6-70, Wiseman 3-68)

BANGLADESH: Second innings (overnight 210-8)

Nafees b Wiseman 9

Javed c and b Franklin 1

Aftab b Vettori 28

Rajin c Franklin b Vettori 35

Ashraful c Styris b Vettori 0

Kapali c Aslie b Wiseman 13

K Mashud b Oram 51

Mushfiqur b Vettori 20

Rafique c Sinclair b Vettori 31

Baisya st McCullum b Vettori 66

Enamul jr not out 0

Extras (b-4, lb-3, w-1) 8

Total: (All out in 70.2 overs) 262

Fall of wkt: 1-9, 2-25, 3-47, 4-51, 5-74, 6-123, 7-161, 8-183, 9-217

Bowler O M R W

Oram 10 4 33 1

Franklin 8 3 16 1

Wiseman 24 4 106 2

Vettori 28.2 9 100 6

Result: New Zealand won by an

innings and 101 runs.

Series result: New Zealand won

t h e

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Pakistan enjoy edge

Inzamam crosses 7,000 Test runs

Cricket

AFP, Karachi

Pakistan took charge of the second and final Test against Sri Lanka here on Friday as recalled middle-order batsman Younis Khan celebrated his return to the national team with a fine century. The 26-year-old Younis made 124 to help lift the home team to 298-4 at the close of the second

day's play, a lead of 90 runs after Sri Lanka scored 208 in the first

innings.

At stumps skipper Inzamamul Haq remained unbeaten on 79 after Riaz Afridi was bowled by Chaminda Vaas for nine in the last over of the day.

Younis, playing his first Test in 13 months and the 29th of his career, hit a dozen boundaries and a six in his 316-minute innings, which ended when he edged left arm spinner Rangana Herath to slip four



Pakistan batsman Younis Khan is elated after reaching his hundred against Sri Lanka on the second day of the last Test at Karachi yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

overs before close.

Younis' performance gave Pakistan's batting line-up some much-needed stability after no-one was able to post three figures in the team's 201-loss in the first Test at Faisalabad.

Younis, from Peshawar, reached his sixth career century with a pulled shot off Dilhara Fernando for two runs.

He added 149 runs with Inzamam and justified the backing of his captain, who has been accused in the local media of favouring him too much, in pushing for his recall.

Inzamam was in masterful form himself and matched his partner stroke for stroke. On 66, the burly right-hander scored his 7,000th run in his 96th Test.

He is only the second Pakistan batsmen after Javed Miandad (8,832 runs in 124 Tests) and the 24th batsmen in the world to cross the milestone.

Inzamam, who took 14 deliveries to score his first run, opened up in the second session by hitting two boundaries off pace spearhead Vaas and a six off Herath to take Pakistan to 214-2 at tea with Younis at the other end.

Pakistan had lost opener Yasir Hameed in the fourth over of the day for three when he was judged caught behind after chasing a wide delivery off Farveez Maharoof.

Behind the stumps was Kumar Sangakkara, who was keeping wickets in the absence of regular keeper Romesh Kaluwitharana, who injured his right hand while batting on Thursday.

Younis, a regular member in one-day matches, then helped set up Pakistan's innings with a partnership of 122 for the second wicket with Imran Farhat.

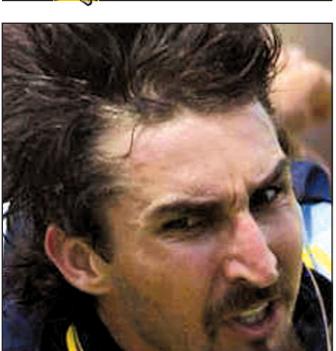
Farhat was out in the penultimate over before lunch for 72 when Vaas trapped his leg before wicket.

Vaas was the pick of Sri Lanka's bowlers with 2-57.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at stumps on the second day of the second and final Test between Pakistan and Sri Lanka at the National Stadium in Karachi on Friday.

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Did U Know?

Desmond Haynes is the only batsman to carry his bat thrice in Test matches.



TALK TURKEY

Jason Gillespie (Australian pacer) "The beauty of this side is that it does not matter who gets the wickets."



STAR Sports

English Premier Football League
Man United vs Portsmouth
Live at 7:55 pm

Primera Liga
Barcelona vs Bilbao
Live at 12:00 am (Sunday)

TEN Sports

Pakistan vs Sri Lanka
Second Test, Day Three
Live at 10:15 am

ESPN

English Premier Football League
Birmingham City vs Crystal Palace
Live at 5:40 pm

Arsenal vs Southampton
Live at 7:55 pm

Liverpool vs Blackburn Rovers
Live at 10:10 pm

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