



THIS IS HOW HE WENT ABOUT HIS JOB: Bangladesh captain Mohammad Ashraful miscues a drive only to be caught by Aaron Redmond (not in picture) at cover in the second innings of the first Test at the Chittagong Divisional Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Ashraful's Ctg

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he under-performed both in the first innings (2) and the third and final ODI (8).

This follows another disappointing score during last year's South Africa tour when his Chittagong leg yielded only four runs from two innings.

With such high standards expected of the country's talisman, the cries of, "This is the time for you to leave, give a chance to the good newcomers, take rest for somebody Ashraful," could only be interpreted as frustration from the part of the avid fans who turned out at the Chittagong Divisional Stadium.

"We thought Ashraful would play the role of the anchorman, overcoming his failure today while Bangladesh needed runs and wickets to fight the visitors," said Emon, a university student watching the match from the "Special Enclosure."

"The shot Ashraful played was nothing that could not be avoided, but his irresponsible batting pushed the team in a worse situation," Emon observed.

Comparing Ashraful to Daniel Vettori, another viewer, Syem Ahmed said that the Tigers captain should take lessons from his New Zealand opposite number who saved his team to some extent in the first innings through an unbeaten 55 runs and then bowled 31 overs today (Sunday) taking Ashraful's wicket for second time in the Test match.

"A captain should take responsibility in the crucial moments of the game. That is what cricket history shows," Syem said.

Girls cricket camp from Nov 5

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) will arrange a cricket coaching camp for girls, which will start from November 5.

The women's wing of BCB has arranged the camp where girls of class VI to Class XII of Dhaka Metropolitan will be eligible to register their names.

The interested candidates have been asked to register at BCB's Mirpur office by October 28.

Amit puts

FROM PAGE 17
INDIA: First innings 469 (Ganguly 102, Dhoni 92, Tendulkar 88; Johnson 3-85, Siddie 3-114)

AUSTRALIA: First innings (overnight 102-4)

Hayden b Zaher 0
Karnich b Mishra 33
Ponting lbw b Sharma 54
Hussey c Dhoni b Sharma 23
Clarke lbw b Mishra 78
Watson lbw b Mishra 9
Haddin b Harbhajan 9
White b Mishra 5
Lee c Dravid b Harbhajan 35
Johnson not out 9
Siddie b Dhoni b Mishra 0
Extras: (lb-13, nb-4) 17
Total: (All out in 101.4 overs) 268

Fall of wickets: 1-0, 2-17, 3-62, 4-102, 5-130, 6-146, 7-167, 8-240, 9-262, 10-268.

Bowler O M R W
Zaher 25 7 56 1
Sharma 21 4 68 2
Harbhajan 29 9 60 2
Mishra 26 8 71 5

INDIA: Second innings
Gambhir not out 46
Sewag not out 53
Extras: (nb-1) 1
Total: (For no loss in 23 overs) 100

Bowler O M R W
Lee 6 0 22 0
Siddie 8 1 30 0
Johnson 7 0 43 0
White 2 0 5 0

Sourav won't change mind

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

A 16th Test century in Mohali won't change Sourav Ganguly's plans to retire after the India-Australia Tests, he said on Saturday. Ganguly's 102 helped India to a formidable 469 on the second day of the second Test, but the innings hasn't forced a rethink for the former India captain.

"I think it's the right decision and I have no regrets," Ganguly said. "I just don't want to play any more, to be honest. I've been playing well for the last two years."

Ganguly has had a consistent run since returning to the team in December 2006, but was dropped from the Rest of India squad -- primarily consisting of Test regulars -- after a poor series in Sri Lanka. Ganguly, however, found a

place in the Test squad picked by a new set of selectors and surprised all by announcing his retirement before the first Test in Bangalore.

"Except for the Sri Lanka series, I've had an outstanding two years," he said. "But it's just that I feel the time has come to go."

He said he was pleased with his effort in Mohali -- Ganguly walked in at 163 for 4 and shared century stands with Sachin Tendulkar and Mahendra Singh Dhoni. "I'm just happy to get runs," he said. "I still hope to have five innings to go (before retirement). I will try to do well and finish off well."

"I've tried to enjoy every single day because every day will be the last," he said. "I'm trying to do my best."

During his innings, Ganguly became the fourth Indian batsman to go past 7000 Test runs. Ganguly has 11,363 ODI runs at an average over 40 -- similar to that in Tests --

but he said it's the performance in the five-day format that would be remembered in spite of the emergence of Twenty20.

"You will be remembered in what you have done in Test matches. First Test matches, then one-day cricket," he said. "When you talk about great players, you talk about a [Sunil] Gavaskar or [Steve] Waugh or Tendulkar or [Ricky] Ponting. It's because of their performances in Test matches. Not what they do in Twenty20."

India began the series with question marks over the future of their senior players, but Ganguly felt performance, and not age, should be considered. "It's going to be an individual decision for everyone. Age is no bar," he said. "It's the runs you get and people like [VVS] Laxman, Sachin and Rahul [Dravid] have been scoring runs. They should be judged on their performance."

Nadal follows Federer

Tennis

AFP, Madrid

Heavyweights Rafael Nadal and Roger Federer both crashed out of the Madrid Masters on Saturday leaving unheralded Frenchman Gilles Simon to face British world number four Andy Murray in the final.

Unseeded Simon pulled off a fighting 3-6, 7-5, 7-6 upset of world number one Nadal although the Spaniard is now guaranteed the year-end top spot courtesy of Federer's 3-6, 6-3, 7-5 loss to Murray. The Scotsman, who lost to Federer in the US Open final six weeks ago, will be bidding for his second consecutive Masters shield after winning Cincinnati in August.

"I didn't play well on the backhand and he was playing with unbelievable confidence," said Nadal after his marathon semi-final defeat where each set lasted for more than an hour on average.

"Simon was putting all the balls inside the lines. It was disappointing not to win, it's tough to lose a match like this after a big fight. I tried my best, I'm happy with myself for that."

"I was not under any big pres-

sure, not after the season I've had," said the winner of eight titles including Roland Garros, Wimbledon and the Olympics.

The gutsy win in three hours, 22 minutes keeps Simon thick in the chase for a possible spot at the wrapup Masters Cup in Shanghai.

He will try to continue his run

Murray Madrid master

AFP, Madrid

British fourth seed Andy Murray won the second major title of his career on Sunday with a 6-4, 7-6 defeat of France's Gilles Simon in the final of the Madrid Masters.

Murray, who had already qualified for the season wrap-up event in Shanghai, also claimed the fourth title of the season after winning the Cincinnati Masters two months ago. He is the first player from Britain to win four ATP crowns in a single season.

The victory in 1hr34min denied Simon a chance to improve in the race for the season-ending Masters Cup, where the Frenchman stands provisional ninth with two weeks of regular season play remaining.

next week at Lyon and during the last week of the regular season at the Paris Masters.

Victory nudged the modest Frenchman, winner of three titles this season, into provisional ninth as four spots in the eight-man field are still to be determined over the next two weeks.

Murray fired 14 aces and broke in the penultimate game to turn the tables on Federer, improving his record in their series to 2-1 this year after a victory in Dubai during February.

"That was a great match, a top five match for me," said Murray of his performance this season. "When you play Federer or Nadal, you have a respect for them, you expect a tougher match."

Simon matched Nadal shot-for-shot in their slugfest, with the underdog failing to yield an inch in the struggle.

Simon gamely fought through after dropping the first as he ran the Spaniard back and forth across the court, a favourite Nadal tactic.

The French player, who saved 17 of the 22 break points he faced, produced 60 unforced errors to the 55 of Nadal.

Will the Tigers pounce?

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off-spinner. He observed that there was enough encouragement in the wicket for his side's batsmen.

"There's plenty of runs out there. A lot of us are saying that it is going up and down all over the shop but it's not that bad a wicket. There's little bit of turn and variable bounce but our guys are in a good position."

"It was always going to turn here (in Bangladesh). We would always come here and expect to play on spinning wickets. But it is easier when the ball gets older," added the Kiwi.

But chief selector Rafiqul Alam said that the spinners, especially Shakib Al Hasan, would be quite a handful.

"Shakib (Al Hasan) has been bowling well for the last few months, especially in the one-dayers and this first innings," said the former national cricketer.

He also believed that a target of 300 runs would be a slightly comfortable for the Tigers, given the

state of the wicket.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at stumps on the third day of the first Test between Bangladesh and New Zealand at the Chittagong Divisional Stadium on Sunday:

BD: First innings 245 (Mehrab 83, Mushfiqur 79; Vettori 5-59)

NZ: First innings (overnight 155-9)

Redmond lbw b Shakib 19
How c Rajin b Shakib 16
Ryder c Rajin b Shakib 1
Taylor lbw b Razzak 12
McCullum c Razzak b Shakib 25
Flynn c Mushfiqur b Nayeem 19
Oram c Mashrafe b Shakib 0
Vettori not out 55
Mills c Mushfiqur b Shakib 4
Patel c Shakib b Ashrafal 0
O'Brien b Shakib 5
Extras: (b-8, lb-6, nb-1) 15
Total: (All out in 64.5 overs) 171

Fall of wickets: 1-27, 2-29, 3-46, 4-52, 5-99, 6-99, 7-100, 8-126, 9-155.

Bowler O M R W
Mashrafe 7 4 13 0

Shahadat 11 0 35 0
Shakib 25.5 7 36 7
Razzak 16 1 51 1
Mehrab 1 0 8 0
Nayeem 3 0 11 1
Ashrafal 1 0 3 1

BD: Second innings
Tamin c b Vettori 33
Zunaed c Redmond b Mills 6
Rajin lbw b Patel 6
Ashrafal c Redmond b Vettori 0
Mehrab c Mills b Patel 6
Mushfiqur b O'Brien 32
Shakib c Taylor b Vettori 71
Naeem lbw b Vettori 19
Razzak not out 5
Extras: (b-4, nb-2) 6
Total: (For eight wickets in 84 overs) 184

Fall of wickets: 1-24, 2-36, 3-37, 4-49, 5-71, 6-127, 7-175, 8-180.

Bowler O M R W
Mills 13 2 41 1
O'Brien 11 4 25 1
Vettori 31 10 39 4
Patel 19 7 52 2
Oram 8 2 19 0
Redmond 2 1 4 0

Bad day for Abahanis

SPORTS REPORTER

The teams from the old part of the capital had good outings in both the sixth round matches of the Citycell B. League yesterday with Farashganj and Rahmatganj recording identical victories against Abahani from Khulna and Chittagong respectively.

Farashganj rode on their foreign recruit Johnson's 69-minute strike at their home ground at Narshingdi Stadium to beat Khulna Abahani 1-0.

Khulna Abahani were rooted to second from bottom following their fifth consecutive defeat after beginning the competition with an impressive 3-1 victory against Mukti Joddha in the opening round in Dhaka.

Farashganj, on the other hand, moved to seven points with their second win in five games.

Rahmatganj climbed to third place after five matches when they put an end to Chittagong Abahani's unbeaten home run, the visitors winning by a solitary goal at the MA Aziz Stadium.

Nigerian import Francis slotted the all important goal after 35 minutes for Rahmatganj, who have nine points from three wins including a stunning 2-1 opening round defeat of holders Abahani.

Chittagong Abahani's second loss in five games saw them stuck to five points.

League leaders Sheikh Russel, on 11 points from five outings, will take on bottom-table Mukti Joddha in a seventh round game on Wednesday at the Bangabandhu National Stadium.

NSU win big

SPORTS REPORTER

North South brushed aside Northern 4-0 in the opening match of the Mentors Inter-private University football tournament yesterday.

Naib, Mushfiq, man-of-the-match Mostafa and Imtiaz scored one goal apiece at the Army Stadium in Banani after a colourful opening ceremony.

Earlier, National Sports Council secretary Akbar Hossain declared the meet open. Khairul Hasan, CEO of Mentors Education was also present as chief guest.

Matuail beat BG Press

UNB, Dhaka

The Second Division Football League began yesterday after a 23-day break with Matuail Udayan Sangsad beating BG Press by a solitary goal at the Birshreshtha Shaheed Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur.

Mokhes Ahmed scored the match winner for Matuail on the hour.

Dhanmondi Club take on Kadamtala Sangsad and East End Club face Basabo Tarun Sangha in today's matches at the same venue.

Tikolo ton lifts Kenya

AFP, Nairobi

A fighting century from skipper Steve Tikolo helped guide Kenya to a morale-boosting 95-run victory over Zimbabwe in their tri-series one-day match at the Nairobi Gymkhana Club ground on Sunday.

The 37-year-old Tikolo, who has had a lean spell with the bat in recent ODIs, smashed 102 off 99 balls to set up the victory and put his struggling side back into contention after losing their first game against Ireland on Saturday.

He played the dominant role in the 130-run partnership for the third wicket with 21-year-old Alex Obanda (71) to lay the foundation for the victory over their erstwhile South African opponents.

But Tikolo put it all to the serious pep-talk the team had on Saturday night following the embarrassing 86-run loss to Ireland which left many Kenyan fans wondering the seriousness of the home side.

Tikolo's heroics were nearly overshadowed by the performance of the Zimbabwean seamer Chris Mpofu who took a career-best 6-52 to dismiss the hosts for 285 after winning the toss.

Footballers'

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really when they went for a bus tour of the beautiful city and Manik said the performances have at least given the players some confidence.

"The players have realised that they can play better. This is what we are taking home from this tour," said the former national footballer, who is in his first assignment as national coach.

Manik was undecided on changes but confirmed that injured Hassan Ali Mamun will not play.

"I am not going to change formation and any one among Nazrul, Saikat or Shuvra will replace Hassan in the three-man central defence. There could be more changes but I will take the decision tomorrow morning," added Manik, who has been criticised for playing defensive even after conceding a goal midway through the first half against Myanmar.

It is likely that players like goalkeeper Biplab, debutant midfielder Pranotosh and defenders Nazrul and Saikat will get a chance to play after not being used in the first two matches.

Hosts in control

SPORTS REPORTER



Talha Jubair combined with his new ball partner Sajedul Islam to give Barisal a creditable first innings lead against defending champions Khulna on the second day of the four-day match in the Ispahani Mirzapore Tea 10th National Cricket League at the Fatullah Cricket Stadium yesterday.

Sylhet also rode on their new ball pair Nazmul Hossain and Rashedur Rahman to finish the day on top at the Sylhet District Stadium while Rajshahi put Chittagong under pile of runs at the Rajshahi Divisional Stadium.

BARISAL-KHULNA

Barisal added only ten runs to their overnight score of 278 to allow the new ball bowlers exploit the early morning condition to wrap up Khulna for 210 to ensure a 78-run first innings lead.

Out-of-favour Talha provided the breakthrough by trapping Imrul Kayes lbw for 10 and then all the Khulna top order batsmen failed to carry on after good starts.

Talha finished with figures of 4-43 while Sajedul, who earlier rescued his side with a half-century, picked up three wickets for 51 and Tariqul took two for 59.

Wicketkeeper Sahagir Hossain was top scorer with 40 off 98 balls that featured five boundaries.

Barisal scored two without loss in their second innings before the

stumps were drawn.

SYLHET-DHAKA

Elias Sunny grabbed seven wickets but still Sylhet managed 343 in their first innings after resuming the day on 253-5. The spinner captured four more wickets yesterday to finish on 7-79.

Ejaz Ahmed produced the fourth half-century for Sylhet as the right-hander smashed eight fours and five sixes to make 88 off 143 balls after starting the day on 36 while number ten Nabil Samad contributed an unbeaten 23 off 55 balls with two fours and a six.

In reply, Dhaka lost openers Javed Omar and Anwar Hossain quickly with the scoreboard reading 18 and Nadif Chowdhury followed suit with a first ball duck.

Shamsur Rahman and Mahmudullah Riyad repaired the damage during a 99-run association for the fourth wicket as Dhaka reached 183-5 in 57 overs at close of play.

Shamsur made 76 off 96 balls that included a dozen fours and a six while Riyad added 44 from 96 balls, laced with four boundaries.

Rashedur claimed three wickets while Nazmul picked up two.

RAJSHAHI-CHITTAGONG

Anisur Rahman extended his century to 142 while former national skipper Khaled Mashud hit 72 as Rajshahi took control against Chittagong. The home side, overnight 275-4, declared their first innings on 438-9.

Chittagong made a poor start as they lost three wickets for 54 before stumps were drawn for the day.

Nafis Iqbal, one of the probabilities for Bangladesh's series against New Zealand and South Africa, was batting on 36 while Faisal Hossain accompanied him on three.

SCORES IN BRIEF

RAJSHAHI: First innings 438-9dec (overnight 275-4) (Shakil 13, Zahurul 22, Farhad 88, Rafiqul 20, Anisur 142, Mashud 72, Mushfiqur 16, Shahjada 29, Shuvo 5*, Alamgir 0, extras 31; Tareq 1-85, Moktar 1-78, Younus 4-110, Yasin 2-99).

CHITTAGONG: First innings 54-3 (Salahuddin 12, Nafis 36*, Masum 0, Tariq 2, Faisal 3*, extra 1; Shuvo 2-17, Farhad 1-20).

SYLHET: First Innings 343 all out (overnight 253-5) (Rahman 71, Imtiaz 10, Saikat 4, Mithun 69, Kamrul 62, Sharifullah 2, Ejaz 88, Tapash 0, Nazmul 0, Nabil 23*, Rashedur 6, extras 8; Emon 2-80, Azim 1-21, Elias 7-79).

DHAKA: First Innings 183-5 in 57 overs (Javed 4, Anwar 5, Shamsur 76, Nadif 0, Riyad 44, Marshal 27*, Nazmul 19*, extras 6; Nazmul 2-42, Rashedur 3-32).

BARISAL: First Innings 288 all out (overnight 278-8) (Uttam 3, Hannan 4, Nasiruddin 2, Imran 20, Nasir 67, Rony 6, Arafat 1, Shaheen 52, Sajedul 75, Talha 21*, Tariqul 1, extras 36; Zia 1-42, Dolla 1-50, Robiul 5-86, Murad 1-51, Nazmus 1-17 and Second Innings: 2-0 (Uttam 2*).)

KHULNA: First Innings 210 all out (Nazmus 26, Imrul 10, Robiul 18, Tuskar 10, Mustafizur 10, Sahagir 40, Anas* 20, Zia 0, Dolla 32, Murad 0, extras 22; Talha 4-43, Sajedul 3-51, Tariqul 2-59, Arafat 1-20).

Venus lifts Zurich Open

Tennis

AFP, Zurich

Venus Williams claimed her second title of the year on Sunday when she defeated unseeded Italian Flavia Pennetta 7-6, 6-2 in the final of the Zurich Open.

The third seeded American, who was playing the 60th final of her career, won her 38th title, adding to the Wimbledon crown she earned in July.

Pennetta, who is expected to rise to a new career-high ranking of 14 on Monday, was seeking her fourth consecutive win over Williams, after beating her in Bangkok in 2007 and at Roland Garros and Moscow this year.

"I felt good today," said Williams, who also won the tournament in 1999.

"I just kept improving my game throughout the week, and it's great for me to play my best tennis of the week in the final, against someone playing as well as she is."

The quality of play was worthy of a final, with the players evenly matched in the first set before Pennetta shows signs of weariness in the second.

The Italian, who was involved in a three-set doubles semi-final as well as a hard-fought singles match on Saturday, looked the stronger player in the opening set.

She rallied aggressively from the baseline and drew some superb defensive play from Williams, although she twice failed to make the killers shot at the end of a rally.

Neither player faced a break point in the entire first set, although Williams was taken to deuce five times.

But having held serve more easily, only going to deuce once, Pennetta was totally overwhelmed in the tiebreak, dropping the first six points.

In the second set, a slightly tired-looking backhand into the net gave Williams a break for 2-1, and the American consolidated that in the most spectacular fashion by holding her next service game with four consecutive aces.



PHOTO: AFP

American Venus Williams celebrates after beating Italy's Flavia Pennetta in the final of the Zurich Open yesterday.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

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