The stand-in captain Shakib congratulates the team's efficient bowler Abdur Razzak

It proved to be a trying time for him being away from his family, but the upside was that he managed to make his way into the national under-15 team. It was when he was selected for the under-17 team that people really started to notice him. Former Chief Selector of the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) Faruque Ahmed says, "I first spotted Shakib in the under-17 team. We brought him in on the back of some good performances and from the outset he looked like a player we cound depend on." Faruque continues, "his move from the under-17s to the under-19s was seamless as his game improved and matured."

The mature Shakib that we all now see is a far cry from how he played at the beginning of his career. Known as a bit of a dasher he had a full repertoire of strokes and often scored at faster than a run a ball. His sublime performance in a tri series under-19 tournament final in Dhaka where he took three wickets and scored a century announced that he had finally arrived. Soon his batting style matured along with him, the dasher became an accumulator and his flashy strokes were replaced with deft touches and firm drives. His changed approach to the game along with some fine performances made him impossible to leave out of the national team. "It was an easy decision to pick him for the national team and in a way I was very proud to do so as I had selected him in the under-17s onwards. He was a player that deserved his chance and we knew that we had stumbled upon a rare talent," says Ahmed.



Chilling out during the West Indies tour.

Selected mainly as a bowler he scored an unbeaten 30 to guide Bangladesh to victory in his very first game.