

Wicket not ideal for ODIs

BISHWAJIT ROY from Chittagong

Apart from the coloured clothing it looked almost like a Test match was going on when Bangladesh captain Shakib Al Hasan operated his slow bowlers with two slip fielders and the men at the silly positions during the fourth one-day international against Zimbabwe at the Chittagong Divisional Stadium yesterday.

The home skipper's aggressive field was because the spinners were surprisingly getting good purchase from the track to wrap up the Zimbabwean innings for 44 runs, a best bowling performance for the Tigers after they had dismissed Hong Kong for 105 runs in 2004 Asia Cup in Colombo, although there had a predication from all corner before the match that it would be a good batting track.

Bangladesh top order batsmen did also struggle a little bit to achieve the tiny target but it was ultimately an easy win, in a match which lasted only 36.4 overs, for the home side to confirm the series victory, their fourth consecutive series victory in this year, but it was not the Tigers series victory rather the talking point was the pitch after the match.

The behaviour of the track bamboozled everybody and reminded how risky it is to predict on a track.

The pitch offered plenty of turn and movement, mainly because of early moisture, but it could not only be blamed for the fifth lowest total as the poor shot selections were also reasons behind the debacle not only for Zimbabwe batsmen but also for the local batters. Things could have been much worse for the visitors, who holds the embarrassing lowest one-day total of 35 they made against Sri Lanka at Harare in 2004, had the home side fielders not floored three catches.

But both Bangladesh skipper Shakib and stand-in Zimbabwe captain Hamilton Masakadza had the same opinion that this kind of track was not ideal for one-day cricket.

"When we started playing, we thought it was a flat track but when our spinners came in it was doing a bit and they landed the ball in the right areas. If you look at the result then I guess it's not an ideal one-day track. For a one-day match you would want a pitch where 260-270 runs would be scored and teams would lose by 10-15 runs or win by three wickets. That's the ideal scenario," said Shakib.

"We certainly did not expect it to turn so much and I am sure Zimbabwe also didn't either. There was sharp turn and the balls that went straight skidded. As all their top order batters were right-handers and our



BEGINNING OF THE END: Bangladesh paceman Nazmul Hossain (C) celebrates taking the wicket of Zimbabwe captain Hamilton Masakadza (not in picture) with teammate Tamim Iqbal during the fourth one-day international at the Chittagong Divisional Stadium yesterday. Nazmul sparked a miraculous batting collapse for the tourists as they were shot out for 44, the fifth lowest total ever.

PHOTO: AFP

first three spinners were left-armers therefore we had a better chance of getting a result," he added.

"It was a surprise for all of us to find that much turn. Even umpire Aleem Dar said that going by the look of the wicket it wasn't supposed to have so much spin. I think the early morning moisture had an impact especially with the covers taken off early. It certainly helped the ball grip," continued the all-rounder.

But Shakib was happy with the outcome at the end.

"But as I have said earlier we have won the series and that's the most important thing. You have got to remember that we are playing at home so we should have home advantage. We know that it will not be that easy for our batsmen to adjust to seaming pitches and therefore wickets are prepared keeping in mind the strength of the home team. When we go to New Zealand we may have three or even four pacers in the playing eleven. It is totally dependent on the conditions. If there is a scope for taking home advantage who wouldn't take it?," he said defended the condition.

He also said that the mood was excellent after they dismissed a team for the lowest total against Bangladesh.

"It's a wonderful feeling to be able to bowl out a side for 44. It doesn't happen everyday. I also wanted a 10-wicket win which I think we haven't had before. Disappointed that it didn't happen. Maybe next time! The mood in the dressing room was unique," he said adding that losing the toss was a blessing in disguise.

Masakadza however blamed both the character of the surface and his batsmen's reckless batting.

"It looked like a good batting track but it was too slow for a one day wicket. We misread the wicket today, it was slower than we thought. We did give wickets away, which is something we have been doing throughout the series. It is really disappointing that we are 3-1 down after going one up in the series" said the Zimbabwean stand-in skipper adding that it was not an ideal track for 50-over match.

It was however a special moment for Nazmul Hossain who got the man of the match award despite the spinners dictating terms.

"It is quite understandable that we would have more spinners as that's our strength. I am always happy if I get results. It means the hard work has paid off. It is not fun bowling on flat wickets if you are a pace bowler but I that also makes me more responsible," said Nazmul, the lone pacer in the match.

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SuperSport3

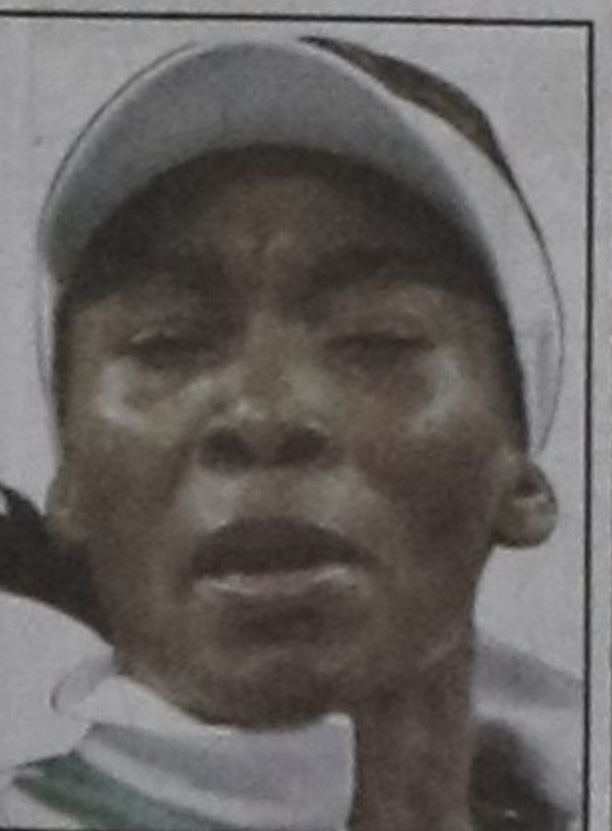
UEFA Champions League
Rubin Kazan v Barcelona
Live from 12:15am (Thursday)

SuperSport7

UEFA Champions League
Olympic Lyon v Liverpool
Live from 2:30am (Thursday)



Citycell Bangladesh League
Abahani v Shuktara (5:30pm)
Venue: Bangabandhu National Stadium
Premier Div Cricket League
Abahani v Victoria
Venue: Shaheed Chandra Stadium, Bogra
Surjo Tonon v BKSP
Venue: Fallich Cricket Stadium
Mohammedan v Old DOHS
Venue: BKSP-2
Bangladesh U-19 v England U-19
Seventh Youth ODI
Venue: Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium



Venus Williams

(American tennis superstar)
"I gave 100 per cent. It's the end of the season. It's been a good week and I have no complaints. Serena played a great match. She didn't make many errors." After losing the Qatar Open to younger sister Serena Williams on Sunday.

Frustration at dire show

SPORTS REPORTER from Ctg



The match was finished and the presentation ceremony was also completed but still there were a few spectators passing the time in the galleries at the Chittagong Divisional Stadium by watching the cricketers practicing in the ground.

"Everything is finished even before we settled in our seat. We have the whole day programme but....." was the way a teenager expressed his disappointment from inside the fence after the premature finish of the fourth one-day international between Bangladesh and Zimbabwe which took only three hours following the batting debacle of the tourists.

The port city fans always turn up to the ground to watch the international match whenever they get the opportunity and there was no exception yesterday but it was not a fitting affair in the middle

which could satisfy them. It was more frustrating for the ones who came late and missed the home side bowlers celebrated success one after another: the only part to enjoy in the match.

Nothing could have been better than the delight in a win as a home fan. And definitely the port city crowd got this essential taste on Tuesday when their beloved Tigers won the fourth game quite convincingly by six wickets to take the five-match one-day series. But the fact was that this 50-over-a-side game disappointed the nearly jam-packed crowds many ways. No way it could be an ideal one for the cricket loving people when the entertainment was completely missing in this limited-over version of cricket.

Who would be blamed for this? There had been however

different opinions regarding this issue as some blasted the curator for producing an unfriendly wicket but some were also not ready to accept a team were dismissed for 44 runs no matter how much the pitch offered turn and movement for the local bowlers in the early morning.

Former national cricketer turned ICC umpire Enamul Haque found too much turn but his former teammate turned commentator Athar Ali Khan however opined "any team should score at least 200 runs at this pitch".

The common spectators however were hardly bothered with the technical issues rather they blamed the Zimbabweans poor batting and they were also disappointed with the way Bangladesh won the match.

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FIVE LOWEST ODI TOTALS

Date	Team	Score	Overs	RR	Inns	Opposition	Ground
Apr 25, 2004	Zimbabwe	35	18.0	1.94	1	Sri Lanka	Harare
Feb 19, 2003	Canada	36	18.4	1.92	1	Sri Lanka	Paarl
Dec 8, 2001	Zimbabwe	38	15.4	2.42	1	Sri Lanka	Colombo
Feb 25, 1993	Pakistan	43	19.5	2.16	1	West Indies	Cape Town
Nov 3, 2009	Zimbabwe	44	24.5	1.77	1	Bangladesh	Chittagong

Gayle chosen unanimously

CRICINFO, undated

Chairman of selectors Clyde Butts has said that Chris Gayle was the unanimous choice to captain the side to Australia despite being part of the long-drawn contractual dispute between the West Indies' leading players and the region's board.

Butts said the other players considered for the top job included were Ramnaresh Sarwan, Dwayne Bravo (both former captains) and vice-captain Denesh Ramdin. "Those four names were considered for the captaincy of the West Indies team," Butts told Caribbean Media Corporation. "At the end we thought that Chris Gayle was at this time and at this moment the most suitable person to captain West Indies and take them to Australia."

Daren Ganga was spoken of as a potential leader of the team, especially after impressing with his captaincy skills in Trinidad and Tobago's unexpected run to the final of the

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MSC maul Muktijoddha

SPORTS REPORTER



Title contenders Mohammedan Sporting Club kept up their winning run in the Bangladesh League when they recorded a convincing 4-0 win over Muktijoddha Sangsad in their third match of the league at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Nigerian midfielder Christina Emeka struck twice while winger Abdul Baten Komol and defender Nasiruddin netted one goal apiece to put the Black and Whites on the top of the 13-team point table with maximum nine points, a three point cushion over their archrivals Abahani and Sheikh Russel though the last two sides have played a match less than the leaders.

Federation Cup champions Mohammedan, who struggled to win by a narrow 1-0 margin over hosts Shuktara Jubo Sangsad in Narayanganj last week, recovered from their poor performance to present a superb show against the All Red outfit, who suffered three straight defeats in as many matches to stay at bottom.

In a bid to repair the hole in the backline, coach Maruful Haq chose Nigerian defender Paul Emanuel Dami in place of Hasan Al Mamun along with young playmaker Komol in the starting eleven and the Motijheel-based outfit got immediate reward in the 17th minute after Mohammedan came close twice to taking an early lead.

Zahid Hasan Emily released a defence split-

ting throw for Nigerian striker Alamu Bukola Olalekan, who beat Muktijoddha goalkeeper Nizam Majumdar, but saw his sluggish shot well blocked by defender Prodip Kumar Poddar from the goalline in the 13th minute.

However, Mohammedan did not wait long for the opener and five minutes later Komol gave them the lead after Mohammedan defender Ariful Islam, who was seemingly offside, tried to take a bicycle kick on an Arman Aziz free kick outside the box and the ball went to Komol, who did not hesitate to strike home from close.

Muktijoddha players protested the strike and the play was halted for a couple of minutes and later resumed. Muktijoddha, who had a plan to collect a point from Mohammedan after defeats against Brothers Union and Sheikh Russel, mustered their first shot on the target in the 36th minute and nearly got the equaliser. Rasel Ansari snatching a ball from Mohammedan goalkeeper MN Shakil sent wide of the open net to frustrate the Red Devils.

After the break, Mohammedan coach Maruf sent Mamunul Islam in the midfield, promoting Emeka to pair with striker Emily and Mohammedan saw a super cohesion in the midfield while Muktijoddha struggled to find a good understanding in the midfield even in their third match of the league.

Besides, Golam Sarwar Tipu's Muktijoddha never yielded a threatening attempt against Mohammedan, who doubled the lead in the

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Aussies fined

PTI, Mohali

The Australian cricket team was yesterday fined for maintaining a slow over-rate during the fourth one-day international against India here on Monday.

ICC Match Referees Chris Broad imposed the fines after Ricky Ponting's side were ruled to be two overs short of their target at the end of the match, which Australia won by 24 runs.

In accordance with the ICC Code of Conduct regulations governing over-rate penalties, players are fined five per cent of their match fees for every over their side fails to bowl in the allotted time, with the captain fined double that amount.

As such, Ponting was fined 20 per cent of his match fee while his players received 10-per-cent fines.



PHOTO: STAR

Mohammedan's Nigerian striker Alamu Bukola (R), who tried everything he could to get his name on the score sheet in a 4-0 win over Muktijoddha, here wrong-foots goalkeeper Nizam Majumdar only to be denied by a defender on the goal-line during the Bangladesh League encounter at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Match of many impacts

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

Zimbabwe's paltry total of 44 in Chittagong means they've featured in three of the five lowest totals in ODIs. A look at some of the other stats highlights from the match.

Zimbabwe crawled at the rate of 1.77 runs per over during their innings, using up 24.5 overs to score 44. The run-rate is the third-lowest in the history of ODIs, among innings which have lasted 60 or more balls. Canada's rate of 1.11 (45 all out in 40.3 overs) against England in the 1979 World Cup is the least, followed by Pakistan's 1.68 against West Indies in a Benson and Hedges World Series game in Sydney in 1992.

Thanks to that run-rate, while the score is the fifth-lowest in ODIs, in terms of overs faced, Zimbabwe's effort ranks only 26th (in innings where teams have been bowled out). Zimbabwe themselves have been bowled out in fewer overs on five occasions. This is also the second time

they've been bundled out in 24.5 overs -- the last time it happened, though -- against England in Bristol in 2003 -- they scored 92, more than twice the number of runs they did today.

Bangladesh won the match with 229 balls to spare, which is their most comprehensive ODI win in terms of balls remaining, and the 11th most comprehensive overall. (Click here for the full list.) The most comprehensive is 277 balls, by England against Canada in the 1979 World Cup, but that was a 60-over game. In a 50-over mismatch, the most lopsided was Sri Lanka's eight-wicket win against Zimbabwe in Colombo in 2001, when they knocked off the 39 needed for victory in 4.2 overs. Bangladesh's previous best had been against Kenya in 2006, when they won with 157 balls to spare.

There were six ducks in the match -- four by Zimbabwe and two by Bangladesh. There have only been eight ODIs with more zeroes.

With this victory, Bangladesh have improved their overall record against Zimbabwe to 24 wins and 22 losses, with their home record against them improving to 13-10.