

Shakib's boys win Day One

BISHWAJIT ROY from Chittagong

The morning didn't show the day for the Indians at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in the port city on Sunday. India amassed 63 runs without losing any wicket from 13 overs in the first session giving indication that the much-praised batting line-up were going to pile up a mammoth total after Bangladesh captain Shakib Al Hasan had decided to bowl first to exploit the overcast condition. Many might have been frustrated by the performance of the local bowlers in the first session but everything changed dramatically after the lunch session when India lost wickets like ninepins, thanks to the disciplined bowling effort by the Bangladesh bowlers, especially Shakib and Shahadat Hossain were outstanding. It was a disastrous second session for India as they lost six wickets for 97 runs. And at the end of the day, Tigers proved that they have the quality to pull off surprise even in the longer-version of the game as an improving side. Sachin Tendulkar may have stood tall to frustrate Shakib's men a little bit but it was a memorable day nonetheless for the Tigers considering the fact that the Indian batting had hardly collapsed like that in the recent past when making over 400 runs has become a common feature of their batting.

Left-arm spinner Shakib, who is considered by his coach Jamie Siddons as the best spinner in the world, not only opened the floodgate by removing danger-man Virender Sehwag (52 off 51

balls), who offered a simple catch to Tamim Iqbal at extra cover in the second over of the second session but also led the attack from the front taking the maximum work-

load on his shoulder.

Right-arm paceman Shahadat Hossain, who was unlucky not to complete a deserved five-for as Shafiqul Islam dropped a

sitter from Zaheer Khan and then indecision from three fielders deprived him taking the prized wicket of Sachin Tendulkar on 76, was as aggressive as he

could have been to give his skipper great support.

Shakib though praised all his bowlers for putting in a superb performance against a strong batting line-up.

"I think our main target was to bowl an accurate line and length. The bowlers did their job and the fielders supported them although we missed a

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HOWZZAT! Bangladesh captain Shakib Al Hasan appeals unsuccessfully for an lbw decision against India's Ishant Sharma on the opening day of the first Test in Chittagong yesterday. A close call and it could have been his fifth wicket of the day.

PHOTO: STAR



SUNIL GAVASKAR

Bangladesh underlined the improvement that they have made at the Test level by having India on the run on the first day of the Test. Shakib Al Hasan's decision to field first after winning the toss looked defensive when it was taken. The delayed start and the overcast conditions would no doubt have given the Indian seamers plenty of help and so he may have wanted to protect his batsmen from that. Whatever his reasons, the way he led the team, his field placing, bowling changes were spot on and he never allowed the Indians to break free. It was a terrific performance by the bowlers but who would have thought it was going to happen the way it did especially at lunch time when India were 63 for no loss. The one hour of play before lunch saw the Indian openers being beaten by the slowness of the pitch. There was a sort of a tennis ball bounce and the ball seemed to stop on the batsmen. There were plenty of uppish drives which did not go to hand in that one hour before lunch.

After lunch the Indians made the mistake of underestimating the bowlers and forgetting that whatever the quality of an attack all it takes for a batsman to be back in the pavilion is just one mistake.

Sehwag began the post lunch session with three boundaries to reach another half century and his highest score against Bangladesh but he perished in the next over when he couldn't keep his back-foot drive along the ground. Gambhir too lost his wicket to an ambitious shot trying to cut a ball that bounced more than he expected. Still it was thought that with two men with almost 25000 runs between them, Dravid and Tendulkar would get themselves in and play the big innings.

Shahadat Hossain who was probably smarting from his omission from the playing eleven in the Tri-Nations Tournament bowled Dravid with a beauty. Not too often has 'The Wall' been breached in such a fashion and the bowler's delight was understandable.

Shakib is hard to get away at the best of times and he got enough turn to keep the batsmen guessing. He bowls a nagging length and he mixed the arm ball cleverly. India kept losing wickets regularly; but for Tendulkar they would have been all out by now. 'The Master' batted superbly watching the ball right on to his bat and playing very late so that any movement could be countered. He also kept looking for runs so that Indian bowlers would have something to defend. The ball is turning so Amit Mishra would not be easy to counter and if the skies remain dull then Zaheer and company also would love to bowl.

There is no doubt that the first days honors belonged to Bangladesh and now it's up to their batsmen to drive home the advantage that their bowlers have given them.

U-19s let it slip

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Under-19s lost their second match of the campaign as they lost to West Indies by a single run in Palmerston North yesterday.

Chasing 250 to win, Bangladesh needed two runs from three balls with one wicket in hand, but Shaker Ahmed fell short of his ground as sparking wild celebrations in the West Indian camp. Bangladesh's chase had been one of fits and starts -- four batsmen fell between individual scores of 13 and 15 -- until Shabbir Rahman and Tasamul Haque forged a 73-run partnership for the sixth wicket. Rahman's dismissal for a 52-ball 53, to the legspin of Yannick Careiah at 187 for 6 broke the momentum, which was followed by Careiah sending back Nurul Hasan seven runs later. West Indies took the eighth wicket at 225, but Haque and the No. 10 Abul Hasan appeared to have Bangladesh on track for a tense win in the final over.

But West Indies were still to play their best card. Haque was bowled by the medium-pacer Jason Holder for 54 with the third ball, and on the fourth Shaker was run out.

Cariah was adjudged Man of the Match for his two wickets and 44 earlier in the day, when he had helped West Indies' middle order recover after a shaky start induced by seamer Shaker Ahmed. His two wickets in an economical new-ball display had left West Indies at 20 for 3 inside six overs, but Careiah, the captain Andre Creary (53), and the lower middle order weighed in. Shane Dowrich and Akeem Dewar, who took three wickets in Bangladesh's chase, further boosted West Indies down the order

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Sachin asks to wait & see

BISHWAJIT ROY from Chittagong

When Sachin Tendulkar attended the press briefing after scoring an unbeaten 76 on an eventful first day of the opening Test against Bangladesh at Chittagong yesterday, the batting maestro was up against some obvious yet bitter questions that interestingly had nothing to do with his outstanding effort under pressure that also saw him cross the 13,000-run milestone.

The match started hot on the heels of an explosive remark from stand-in India captain Virender Sehwag who went on record by saying their opponents were an 'ordinary side'. And it got a definite twist after the hurdling Tigers pulled something special out of the ordinary in a day where India lost eight wickets for 230 runs thanks to skipper Shakib Al Hasan and paceman Shahadat Hossain who equally shared the wickets of a vaunted Indian batting lineup.

Was it enough for Bangladesh to give their opponents the impression that they had the ability to surprise the number one Test side?

Tendulkar however was not ready to give a straightforward answer while talking during the briefing. "We have to wait and see," was the

brief answer from the Indian 'cricket god' when he was asked if he, like Sehwag, believed that Bangladesh were not capable of taking twenty Indian wickets.

Asked whether his captain made a mistake by undermining the Bangladesh attack, the champion batsman said: "Well he said it and you go and ask him. I should not be answering the question."

The 36-year-old batsman, who has been playing the game for last two decades and achieved milestones that nobody had accomplished before, said that the condition has played a major role behind his team's batting debacle but he also praised the Bangladesh bowlers.

"Bangladesh exploited the condition quite well. The wicket had a lot of moisture and it took a long while to dry. In fact even if you go there now you will see a lot of moisture. Eventually it is going to be a good batting track. It will certainly play differently tomorrow and the day after."

"That is happening because of the dampness. It might turn less tomorrow and it is going to turn even lesser day after tomorrow," explained Tendulkar.

He also dismissed the notion that bad shot selection played a role behind the collapse.

"Nobody plays a shot thinking that he is going to get out. Couple of guys were unlucky like [VVS] Laxman. The ball hit his [Laxman's] toe and then went back to

the keeper. Such thing happens in cricket. But the game is not over yet. There is a long way to go," said Tendulkar.

When asked about his innings, Tendulkar said: "I thought one had to be patient. Obviously there were wickets falling. One had to sort out this differently. Shot selection became important, just needed to hang around and build partnership, which did not happen."

Tendulkar also believes that there is a chance to see the match roll into the fifth day.

"As I said there is a long way to go. Things will become different. We will try and get as many runs as possible. Whatever number of runs we score it's good for us," he said.

India were playing their first Test after claiming the number one position from Australia and Tendulkar said that it was not a burden for them.

"It's nice to be number one [Test side]. Yes that is something we worked hard for. We played consistently good cricket. It has not happened overnight. It is nice to be in this position. Obviously nobody has taken this position for granted," he added.

Asked how it feels to become the only batsman to have scored 13,000 runs, Tendulkar said: "Well, it's not a situation to celebrate the achievement because team comes first to me. But still it's nice to hear that," he said.

100m looks distant

SPORTS REPORTER



Bangladesh Athletic Federation (BAF) has a history of producing the fastest man in South Asian

(SA) Federation Games that even the regional superpower India can envy.

In the last ten editions Bangladesh won the blue riband event four times with country's legendary sprinter Shah Alam clinching it twice in Dhaka 1985 and in Kolkata 1987. Bimal Chandra Tarafdar emerged from nowhere to win the 100m sprint in Colombo 1991 before Mahabub Alam matched the feat of his predecessors in 1993 on home soil.

However, as the country is set to stage the regional showpiece event for the third time from January 29 to February 9, the man who himself won it twice and now holds the chief executive's post of the BAF almost dismissed the chances of winning a gold in the most coveted track and field event.

Though the performances of the Bangladesh athletes were inspiring in the beginning of the regional meet, their

presence could hardly be felt after 1993. They failed to even manage a single medal in athletics in Islamabad 2004. They restored some pride in the next edition in Colombo 2006 winning one gold and two silver.

This time, they are determined to clinch two gold medals -- the 100m women's hurdles, an event never won by Bangladesh, and 4x100m men's relay, an event in which Bangladesh won gold in the inaugural meet in Nepal in 1984.

"I know the focus of everyone will be on the 100m sprint in the Games. But those who were our better performers in this event stayed back for better fortunes whenever they were sent abroad for better training," said Shah Alam while announcing the squad for the 11th SA Games at the newly-built Bangladesh Olympic Association Bhawan yesterday.

He however said that Golam Mortaza has done well in the trials and if he can slash 0.10 second from his own mark, he can be a good prospect for winning a medal, if not gold.

But it was not all bleak for athletics as its officials, for a

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BTV & Neo Cricket

Bangladesh v India
First Test, Day Two
Live from 9:30am

ESPN

Australia v Pakistan
Third Test, Day Five
Live from 5:30am

Sportscentre India

Sports News
Live at 8:30pm

STAR Sports

Australian Open
First Round
Live from 6:00am



Bangladesh v India
First Test, Day Two
Venue: Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium, Chittagong.

Chittagong beat Barisal

SPORTS REPORTER

Chittagong bowlers wiped out the Barisal bottom half cheaply on the fourth morning of their National Cricket League match at the Khulna Divisional Stadium to record a 122-run win.

Medium pacer Tarek Aziz did most of the damages as he removed three batsmen while Kamrul Islam took care of the other two as Barisal were bowled out for 108 runs in their second knock. Tarek returned figures of four for 55 for the innings while Kamrul's figures read three for 24.

Barisal had started the day on 53 for five, needing a further 177 runs to eke out an improbable win. Chittagong's Faisal Hossain was adjudged man-of-the-match for his all-round performance. Faisal scored 140 runs and took four wickets in the match.

The other two matches of the first round were wrapped up by Rajshahi and Dhaka already on Saturday.

SCORES IN BRIEF

CHITTAGONG: 200 and 269.
BARISAL: 239 and 108
Result: Chittagong won by 122 runs.

Man-of-the-match: Faisal Hossain (Chittagong)



PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Master India batsman Sachin Tendulkar cuts and cuts it hard for four on way to hitting an unbeaten 76 on the opening day of the first Test against Bangladesh at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in Chittagong yesterday.

IPL auction list shortened

Shakib represents Bangladesh

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

The IPL has released its final list of 66 overseas players who will be involved in the IPL auction on Tuesday. The list is a mix of rising stars such as Kieron Pollard and Eoin Morgan, and ICL returnees like Shane Bond and Damien Martyn in addition to Pakistan players returning to the IPL-fold. The list includes players from all eight Test-playing nations other than India, with 11 players from Pakistan, Australia and South Africa; nine from Sri

Lanka; eight from England and West Indies; four from New Zealand and one each from Bangladesh, Zimbabwe, Canada and Holland.

Initially, 97 players had registered for the IPL auction and once the franchises had gone through the names, the list was pruned to 66.

Brad Haddin, Phillip Hughes and Doug Bollinger are prominent Australia players in the list along with Damien Martyn. Haddin's reputation as an attacking wicket-keeper batsman, and Bollinger's impressive performance with the ball in both

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