

## Kayes hits maiden hundred

### Still can't stop Kiwis' clean sweep

**Cricket**

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh's best performance so far on their New Zealand tour was not enough to deny the hosts from making a clean 3-0 sweep in the one-day series as they won the last match in Christchurch by 3 wickets yesterday.

Imrul Kayes's maiden hundred (101 off 137 balls) and two useful knocks in the middle-order from their two best batsmen Mohammad Ashraful (31) and Shakib Al Hasan (36) gave Bangladesh a decent total on the board (241 for nine in 50 overs). Bangladesh looked on course for more than that and at one stage they were 198 for four, but some very accurate and one-the-wicket bowling from skipper Daniel Vettori and Tim Southee stemmed the run flow and kept the Bangladesh total

very much within reach of the hosts.

New Zealand's chase was led by a swashbuckling effort from Martin Guptill (91 off 109 balls). Bangladesh skipper Shakib Al Hasan (4 for 33) gave them more than a sniff of a chance with some superb spin, but found very little support from others as New Zealand wrapped it up in 44.5 overs with three wickets in hand. With New Zealand taking the lone T20 and ODI series 3-0, focus now shifts to Hamilton where the lone Test will start on the 15th.

CricInfo adds: Kayes batted for the majority of Bangladesh's innings, building productive partnerships with the middle order to guide his team to 198 for 4 after 40 overs. Mohammed Ashraful and Shakib both posted 30s after a disappointing showing in each of the previous ODIs, but were unable to kick on to put the New Zealand attack

under pressure in the final overs.

Kayes, however, paced his innings intelligently, driving aerially through covers early in the innings before settling in for a long knock during the middle overs. Playing second fiddle to the likes of Ashraful and Aftab Ahmed, Kayes rotated strike effectively and hit the occasional boundary to keep the scoreboard ticking over at a healthy rate, even as wickets fell at regular intervals around him. He was slightly fortuitous at times, repeatedly beating McCullum with edges to the third-man boundary, but was the glue that held the Bangladesh innings together. He was eventually dismissed for 101, looking for quick runs in the 48th over.

Despite runs coming from the top order, Bangladesh were once again unable to put in a complete batting performance, and failed to accelerate effectively in the batting

Powerplay and the death overs. While the visitors did well to reach 198 for 4 after the 40th, the final ten overs yielded only 43 runs for the loss of five wickets and left the score at 241 for 9, when at one stage at total in excess of 260 looked likely.

The visitors' failure at the end was also largely due to an excellent spell from Daniel Vettori, who was wicketless until the 44th over before picking up three scalps in consecutive overs to end with 3 for 42 from his ten. Tim Southee also picked up three wickets, and was the pick of the New Zealand attack, conceding just 37 runs from his full quota.

Brendon McCullum began the New Zealand run chase in belligerent fashion, pulling Shafiqul Islam over square leg for six in consecutive overs, but fell attempting an ugly slog, dragging a fuller Rubel Hossain

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Imrul Kayes raises his arms after reaching his maiden hundred in the third ODI against New Zealand at Christchurch yesterday.

PHOTO: INTERNET

## Barisal lose despite win

**Cricket**

SPORTS REPORTER

Barisal posted a five-wicket victory over leaders Rajshahi on Thursday but the success was not good enough for them to book a place in the second phase of the National Cricket League.

Despite the defeat Rajshahi kept the top position with 67 points from five matches while Dhaka accumulated 56 points, Chittagong aggregated 42 points and Khulna improved their tally to 50 points after their eight-wicket success against Chittagong in the fifth round yesterday to enter into the four-team second phase battle starting from

February 15.

As per this season's new format the top four teams qualified for the second phase and Barisal and Sylhet were eliminated from the competition as the two bottom teams.

Now the top four teams will play each other on a single league basis with each team getting three four-day games and points from the first phase

will be carried over to the second phase. The top two finishers according to accumulated points after the two phases will meet in the deciding final on March 6-10 at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur, which will be a five-day game.

A total of 19 hundreds were scored in the first phase with Rajshahi's Forhad Hossain

and Zahurul Islam making three while Chittagonian Nazimuddin was the only batsman to make a double hundred.

It was however seasoned batsman Faisal Hossain who has topped the batting table with 562 runs while Forhad Hossain followed him by accumulating 555 runs and Zahurul was the other batsman who crossed the five-hundred mark as he scored 531 runs from five matches.

Rajshahi's left-arm spinner Saqlain Sajib was the outstanding bowler in the first phase with 43 scalps to his credit while Dhaka's pacers Mohammad Sharif (31) and Talha Jubair (25) secured

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### STANDINGS AFTER FIRST PHASE

Team	M	W	D	L	BBPts	BBPts	TotalPts
Rajshahi	5	3	1	1	19	29	67
Dhaka	5	3	2	0	6	20	56
Khulna	5	3	0	2	8	18	50
Chittagong	5	2	1	2	5	19	42
Barisal	5	2	0	3	4	20	40
Sylhet	5	0	0	5	3	17	20

(Note: BBPts= Batting bonus points; BBPts= Bowling bonus points)



Bangladesh captain and goalkeeper Aminul Haque makes a point to a teammate on the first day of the camp for the AFC Challenge Cup at the Bangladesh Football Federation yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

## Laxman return boosts India

AFP, New Delhi

India's seasoned batsman Venkatesh Laxman will return for the final Test against South Africa after recovering from a finger injury, an official said on Thursday.

"Laxman is fit and will definitely be playing," chairman of selectors Krish Srikkanth told reporters ahead of the decisive Test which starts at the Eden Gardens in Kolkata on Sunday.

India, who lost the first Test in Nagpur by an innings and six runs, need a series-levelling win to retain their top spot in the International Cricket Council's Test rankings.

Laxman, 35, missed the

## Dan ready for Test

**Cricket**

CRICINFO, undated

With the ODI whitewash against Bangladesh complete, New Zealand captain Daniel Vettori is confident that his side can make the switch from the limited-overs version to Test cricket seamlessly, as they prepare for the first Test in Hamilton starting on Monday.

"It's just the nature of international cricket, good players are able to adapt from whatever form of the game you are playing in at the time," Vettori said. "It's the way cricket is going so if you want to be a good player you've got to turn up and expect to perform no matter what the discipline is."

After a hard-fought three-wicket win in the final ODI in Christchurch, which ensured the 3-0 scoreline, Vettori admitted to misreading the drop-in pitch at the AMI Stadium.

"There were a lot more runs in that wicket, so for us to put ourselves under so much pressure was a little bit disappointing," Vettori said. "I still thought it was a 320 [wicket] once we saw how it started to play. I obviously got it wrong, with the toss because if it played that well then it was probably a bat first but that happens," Vettori said.

Vettori was also pleased with the performance of his bowling unit. "I was reasonably happy with how we bowled. I was pretty happy to only go for 40 in the last 10 [overs] and that was the area of concern from the last game. Tim Southee, in particular, was outstanding throughout his spell."

He explained that James Franklin, who was originally going to bat at No.5, had an injured heel which delayed his arrival at the crease. "Thankfully he could go out because he and Ian Butler were pretty composed at the end to bring it home for us," Vettori said.

## Challenge Cup training starts

SPORTS REPORTER

The national booters started their preparation for the AFC Challenge Cup yesterday at the Bangabandhu National Stadium.

Saiful Bari Titoo conducted the training as Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) has yet to confirm about the service of Serbian coach Zoran Djordjevic, who guided Bangladesh to clinch the South Asian Games gold in football after an eleven year break.

BFF on Wednesday declared a 20-member squad for the AFC Challenge Cup, which will kick off from February 16 in Colombo, Sri Lanka, keeping inform striker Enamul Haque out of the squad.

Bangladesh have been pitted in Group A along with Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Tajikistan and they will play their first match against Tajikistan on the opening day.

Bangladesh team will leave for Colombo on February 14.

### SQUAD

Aminul Haque, Nasir, Wali Faisal, Mintu Sheikh, Rezaul Karim, Atiqur Rahman Mishu, Abdul Baten Komol, Mamunul Islam, Touhidul Alam Sabuz, Zahid Hasan Emily, Shakil Ahmed, Biplob Bhattacharya, Nasiruddin Chowdhury, Rokonzaman Kanchan, Intiaz Sultan Jitu, Mobarak Hossain, Zahid Hossain, Mamun Mia, Alamgir Kabir Rana and Mithun Chowdhury.



### STAR Cricket

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Third ODI

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ESPN

Sportscentre India

Sports News

Live at 8:30pm

## CHAMPIONS LEAGUE TWENTY20 Modi asks ECB to find a way out

**Cricket**

CRICINFO, undated

Lalit Modi, the Champions League Twenty20 commissioner, has asked the ECB to make "minor adjustments" to its county schedule to enable English participation in the 2010 tournament. Modi's comments came a day after he announced the tournament schedule, which clashes with the last fortnight of the English domestic season and almost rules out county teams from taking part as they did last year.

The tournament is scheduled to be played between September 10-26; the dates, Modi said, were dictated by the countries' pre-committed series in the ICC's existing FTP.

Although there is only one international bilateral series scheduled at that time -- the ODI series between England and Pakistan, ending on

September 22 -- the ECB's main grouse is that the dates coincide with the final two rounds of the county championship as well as the semifinals and final of a new 40-over league.

"We hope the ECB will be able to pre-empt their domestic tournament and be able to participate by making this minor adjustment to their schedule," Modi told Cricinfo. Doing that, he said, would provide an opportunity to the top two English domestic Twenty20 winners to participate in the world club championships, where 6 million dollars is up for grabs, with 2.5 million dollars going to the winners.

However, the ECB chairman Giles Clarke, who is currently in Dubai for ICC meetings, is understood to have ruled out, at this stage, the possibility of making any alterations to England's domestic schedule, not least because of the impact such a move would have on the ECB's existing sponsorship agreements.

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Injured booter of the national side Mohammad Yousuf cuts a forlorn figure at the Bangladesh Football Federation Bhawan yesterday after his colleagues joined the national camp for the upcoming AFC Challenge Cup. Yousuf injured his arm during the final of the SA Games against Afghanistan and will soon be going abroad for treatment.

PHOTO: STAR