

## Men in white leave Tigers fuming

BISHWAJIT ROY

The pitch remained placid for the batsmen also on the third day and Ian Bell made full use of it by hitting a well-composed hundred to give England a slim 21-run first innings lead at stumps yesterday.

The visitors however must thank the two on-field umpires -- Rod Tucker and Tony Hill -- since as many as three decisions went against the home team on a surface where taking wickets was proving an increasingly tough task. The ultimate result was that England finished the day on 440 for 8 after resuming the day on 171 for three courtesy of Bell's 138 and Tim Bresnan's undefeated 74.

Under the scorching heat Bangladeshi bowlers led by captain Shakib Al Hasan, who was the pick of the local bowlers with four wickets, worked hard putting the ball in the right areas but it did not ultimately pay off because of poor umpiring which has been increasingly common in the series and unfortunately the weaker team fell victim on most of the occasions.

Bangladesh made a perfect start when play resumed at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur as Shakib provided the breakthrough as early as the third over when Jonathan Trott propped forward but the ball bobbed off his pad into his elbow and spun inevitably towards the off stump.

The crisis could have deepened for the visitors soon after the first dismissal but Matt Prior was lucky enough to survive a loud appeal from pacer Rubel Hossain, who bowled with intensity in the demanding conditions, as Tony Hill was shaking his head. Prior finally hit 62 before he was the second victim of Shakib and shared an 88-run partnership in the fifth wicket stand with Bell to steady the England innings.

In the second instant Bresnan survived on five and the unlucky bowler was Shakib. The right-hander leant forward and the ball pitched and spun passing through a clear inside edge on to the pad and looped up to the silly point but Tucker was unmoved and the fielders were left stunned.

Bell was fortunate enough to make his tenth Test hundred in 55 games as he survived a confident appeal from left-arm spinner Abdur Razzak when he was 82. The right-handed batsman tried to flick the ball away but it came off the pads and TV replays clearly showed it pitching in line and hitting the target.

It was unbearable for Bangladesh coach Jamie Siddons to keep his patience as he was shown on the screen pointing towards his leg and also rushing into the match referee's room.

And these mistakes made sure that the game was evenly poised as England rode on a 143-run sixth wicket partnership between Bell, who was later dropped by Imrul Kayes at midwicket off Shafiqul Islam on 120, and Bresnan to kill the

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Bangladesh fielders plead for a confident bat-pad catch against England batsman Tim Bresnan (2nd from L) to Australian umpire Rod Tucker (unseen) on the third day of the second and final Test at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR



**SuperSport5**  
Bangladesh v England  
Second Test, Day 4  
Live from 9:30am

**SuperSport2**  
Indian Premier League  
Bangalore Royal Challengers v  
Chennai Super Kings  
Live from 8:30pm

**SuperSport7**  
Primera Liga  
Sporting v Deportivo  
Live from 1:00am (Wednesday)



**Bangladesh v England**  
Second Test, Day 4  
Time: 9:30am  
Venue: Sher-e-Bangla National  
Cricket Stadium

**Bangladesh League**  
Ctg Abahani v Rahmatganj  
Time: 3:30pm  
Venue: MA Aziz Stadium,  
Chittagong

Muktijoddha v Beanibazar  
Time: 5:00pm  
Venue: Bangabandhu National  
Stadium

## Bell tolls loudly

ATIQUÉ ANAM



England took a narrow lead over Bangladesh at the end of third day's play of the second Test at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium yesterday, courtesy of a dogged hundred from Ian Bell and half-centuries from Matthew Prior and Tim Bresnan.

Bell arrived at the crease on Sunday when England were in a spot of bother losing three of their top-order batsmen for 107 in reply to Bangladesh's 419.

Having survived the rest of the day scoring 25, the 27-year-old batsman yesterday single-handedly guided the innings from a position of uncertainty towards relative safety grafting against good bowling and the heat and he batsman admitted that in the post-match briefing.

"It was tough. We knew we had to play well. The heat and everything else made the condition pretty demanding. It was a difficult day."

After losing overnight partner Jonathan Trott early, Bell found wicketkeeper-batsman Matthew Prior as his partner to add 98 runs in the partnership.

Bell dispatched the ball at will and reached his tenth hundred gliding Rubel Hossain for four behind point. The Warwickshire batsman was elated with the feat.

"It's a nice feeling to get to double figures of centuries in Test cricket. That is something I've worked hard to achieve. I kept working hard. It feels good to be in a good nick going into the summer," he said.

After scoring a 262-ball 138 and taking England past 400, Bell got out when his attempt to sweep against Shakib Al Hasan went awry and Jahurul Islam took an easy catch at mid-wicket. However, he might have been back to the pavilion long before had the umpire judged correctly to a leg-before appeal from Abdur Razzak when he was on 82. And that decision wasn't the only one that went against the hosts; there were two others that hurt the hosts badly. Bell sympathised with his opponents too.

"Sometimes decisions go in your favour, sometimes they don't. That's cricket. Unfortunately for Bangladesh some of the decisions went against them today [Monday] and in our favour. But in the last

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## Frustration gets the better of Shakib

SPORTS REPORTER



It was not an easy task for Bangladesh skipper Shakib Al Hasan to keep his patience after some crucial umpiring decisions went against them on the third day of the second and final Test against England yesterday. The young skipper's frustration however boiled over at the press conference as he threw diplomacy out of the door and came down as hard as he could while slating the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) for their failure to pay for the use of the Umpire Review Decision System.

Shakib was also critical of a lack of expertise on preparation of the pitch to gain a home advantage as well as on the decision of picking left-arm spinner Abdur Razzak instead of Enamul Haque, who is believed to be a more effective bowler in the longer-version of the game.

"I don't have enough money, so I don't want to make any comment," responded Shakib with an inquisitive smile when asked about the poor umpiring. "You know what the decisions were and what they should have been. You all saw it on TV. It could have been a little bit better, and if it was better, we would have got a chance to bat today," he added.

And the obvious question was raised on whether he felt the absence of the referral system that the BCB could have arranged by paying some extra money for the umpiring technology? It seemed that Bangladesh captain was unhappy with the board rather than the umpiring decisions and was critical of the fact that the board paid to have the stadium facilities repainted and

redecorated overnight to welcome the arrival of the ICC president David Morgan.

"The system is expensive, so they would have had to spend some money. I think we would have asked for a referral four times with full confidence, and three of them would have come our way for sure," said Shakib.

"We would have been in a very good position if this system was in use here. It's really bad for us that we did not use the referral system, which we could have done," he continued.

Had it been wise to spend money for the referral system rather than spending all these for flowers?

"Yes, I think it was more important for us [than all these flowers]," he responded.

There was a buzzing that the ball might get some turn from the third day after a dead pitch in the first Test at Chittagong but there was no evidence of that yesterday which further irritated the Bangladesh skipper.

"Whenever we hear the ball will spin, it doesn't. It's nothing new and I am not too disappointed with it, although we have been playing Test match cricket for 10 years, so we should know by now how to take this advantage. When we go to England, they are sure to prepare a bouncy wicket for us," he observed.

Shakib was also disappointed as Razzak failed to make a good partnership with him to put the pressure on the English batsman and he also admitted that it might be better if Enamul was there. "I didn't take this decision [about Razzak selection] but you know everything would have looked okay if he [Razzak] picked up few wickets

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## MIRPUR MASALA

SPORTS REPORTER

The Mirpur Test has so far been a very sparsely attended affair as far as crowd turnout is concerned. The crowd was even thinner than the day before, probably less than three thousand. The oppressive heat didn't show any signs of abating and also the fact that the hosts didn't get to bat on the day might have prompted some to stay at the comfort of their homes and watch the game on TV. Those few that did turn out braving the scorching heat were either school children coming for a peek at their heroes or the unmistakable diehard England fans called the Barmy Army.

### TRAFFIC TROUBLE

Traffic is a regular menace for the dwellers of Dhaka who have to move from one end to the other everyday on different purposes. It turned unbearable on Monday as the traffic almost came to a grinding halt for the first part of the day. The unabated heat added to the misery of the people. A senior sports journalist, who made it to the Mirpur Stadium in three and a half hours from the old part of the city, jokingly said he would book a lodge at the BCB Academy before the start of the World Cup in 2011 so that he could watch the game from the very first ball.

### PENNYWISE, POUND FOOLISH

The heat and traffic outside is a far cry from the cozy air-conditioned press box of the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium. The journalists are always treated to the best of Bangladeshi hospitality, be it local or overseas. But there was a small, pleasant surprise awaiting the journalists on their way to their workplace yesterday. The posh passage to the state-of-the-art press box was decorated with garlands and drapes. It was then that they came to the realisation that the International Cricket Council (ICC) president David Morgan was in for a visit to the stadium. The BCB head office and other parts of the stadium were also decorated. This lavish spending made the journalists a little bemused if not amused as well. When it was brought to the notice of Bangladesh skipper Shakib Al Hasan, he lashed it like a sixer straight to the President's box.

"Yes, I think it was more important for us [to have referral system in place than the flowers]."

# Umpires for the Empire?

SHAHED SADULLAH

For any Bangladeshi supporter, watching the current Bangladesh-England Test series must be a frustrating experience. The Bangladeshis have played well better than most would have expected but the umpiring has gone so heavily against them that a contest in which one side was already struggling to acquire a semblance of balance has become completely lopsided. That they have competed in spite of the poor umpiring is a great credit to the home side.

Bangladesh actually should have won the second ODI had the umpiring been better. Mahmudullah was given out when he was not and Owen Morgan was given not out when he should have been given out and he went on to win the game. They then went to the first Test where they got the wrong end of the umpiring stick with Aftab Ahmed in the first innings and Shakib Al Hasan in the second both being given out when they were not; England got one bad decision when Trott was given caught behind off his helmet but Alistair Cook was also given not out leg before when he should have been. It may be argued that these decisions alone did not account for the 181 runs which ultimately separated the two teams but that is no excuse for bad umpiring. But in the Dhaka Test the umpires really surpassed themselves. Tamim Iqbal, Bangladesh's most prolific batsman was adjudged out when the ball apparently went from his forearm when he was within sight of becoming only the fifth man in Test history to get a hundred in the first session of a Test match; Kevin Pietersen, England's top batsman was given not out when the ball would have hit top of middle and leg. Umpire Hill then repeated the dose with Matt Prior the next morning who should have been given out when he was 9 but went on to make 62. Then Tucker got into the act by denying a bat and pad catch of the Bangladesh captain and Hill once again denied an lbw appeal against Bresnan that would have hit leg stump flush on. In between Hill gave Collingwood leg before when both Pietersen and Prior were much more palpably leg before than Collingwood making one wonder just on what basis decisions were being made.

Given the state of the wicket which makes it difficult for an average Bangladeshi attack to get 20 wickets, such errors have made it almost impossible for the home team to compete on

equal terms. Generally, apologists for umpires which all TV commentators have to be as a job requirement, lament being as far as they are allowed to go say that such errors break even

for both sides but that has not happened in this series. They also say that the umpire has a difficult job to do but then so does the prime minister although that does not preclude all

and sundry from criticising any holder of that position. It is the screwed up values of a bygone age that demand that the umpire must not be criticized which is why someone like Darrell Hair got the opportunity to cause one of the biggest crises in the cricketing world.

Cricket is the most riven sport in the world. Go to any press box in any cricketing venue in England and the atmosphere is so thick with racial feeling you could cut it with a knife. Cricket was the sport which was supposed to teach the values of empire and the first of these was that the umpire's decision, as his motives, were unquestionable. If 300,000 people were to successfully govern 300 million, that sort of value system was very important to inculcate. Cricket's governing body was known as the Imperial Cricket Conference and although its name has changed, its attitudes have not. Thus we have a situation in which a Test match in Bangladesh has to be umpired by a person from New Zealand and a person from Australia whereas there are three Test playing countries next door to Bangladesh India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka from where it would have been cheaper and quicker to get the umpires for this series. I am not trying even vaguely to suggest that racial bias has been behind the very uneven umpiring decisions in this series but the indisputable fact is that both umpires are culturally, ethnically and linguistically much closer to the England side, clearly the stronger of the two contesting sides, in whose favour the overwhelming majority of the decisions have gone. If you happen to be a Bangladeshi and there are some 150 million who may be so described that does not sound too good and it is not difficult to see why people may come to a conclusion that may not be right. That cannot do cricket any favours.

In appointing these umpires, who have had a very poor series, the ICC was clearly oblivious of the racial tensions that so heavily permeate this sport. If they were aware of it they would have realized that justice on the field of play should not only be done but should also be seen to be done. When umpiring decisions go so heavily in favour of one team and the stronger one at that and the similarities behind the umpires and the heavily favoured team are so obvious, most people with latch on to that as the reason for the imbalance although that may not be the case.

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