

Onus on Shakib to save match

BISHWAJIT ROY

Can Shakib Al Hasan celebrate his birthday in style today? The Bangladesh captain will need to do something special on the fifth and final day of the second and final Test against England if he wants to make it a day to remember at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur.

The job will not be easy for the Tigers even to save the match after the fourth day's play as the visitors finally gained the momentum after Bangladesh's second innings was found wanting, with some funny dismissals, and the loss of wickets at regular intervals.

The home side were reduced to 172 for six, to manage only a 95 run lead, with Shakib, who turns twenty-three today, batting on 25 and night watchman Shaiful Islam on naught. Stuart Broad and Graeme Swann with two wickets apiece made regular inroads into Bangladesh's batting order in a pitch where the bowlers finally got some assistance as cracks opened up.

Bangladesh began their second essay fifteen minutes before the lunch break with a 77 run deficit as England were bundled out for 496 after resuming the day on 440 for eight. Tim Bresnan missed his hundred for nine runs as Mushfiqur Rahim made a brilliant stumping off left-arm spinner Abdur Razzak, who also took the day's other wicket of James Tredwell (37). And on that occasion too it was Mushfiqur's

tremendous stumping which put an end to the England innings.

England went for a happy lunch as Broad gave them an early breakthrough by removing the out-of-form Imrul Kayes, who was unlucky as he tried to flick it away but ended up deflecting the ball onto his leg-stump via the bottom of his thigh pad.

Tamim Iqbal however was lucky enough to score a half-century as the left-hander survived twice courtesy of sloppy fielding from Tredwell and Jonathan Trott. But the Chittagonian was stopped at 52 when he flashed an outside off-stump delivery from Swann only to reach the safe hands of Broad at point.

Bangladesh lost one more wicket before the tea break as Junaed Siddiqui also fell victim of an unfortunate dismissal. The tall left-hander drove firmly off the back foot onto Alistair Cook's boot from where the ball looped gently to Tredwell to take a catch and claim his first wicket of the innings.

The quick dismissal of Mahmudullah Riyad after the break deepened the crisis for Bangladesh. The right-hander got an edge from a good delivery of Bresnan to perish for just six runs.

Debutant batsman Jahirul Islam looked to bounce back strongly after a first innings duck as the right-hander opened his account with a six against Swann and hit one more six and two other boundaries to relieve himself of the pressure. But Swann put an end to his 43 run



Bangladesh captain Shakib Al Hasan stands on his toes as he executes a back-foot punch on the fourth day of the second and final Test against England at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Jahirul remains upbeat

SPORTS REPORTER

The platform was not perfect for debutant batsman Jahirul Islam to deal with the press as defeat was looming for the home team at the end of the fourth day's play of the second and final Test at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

But there was no shortage of confidence when the newcomer talked about his team's chance to earn a credible draw, his effort in the second innings after a first innings duck and obviously on poor umpiring and the pitch.

"We should draw the match because we have played good cricket. It will be really nice for us if we have two more wickets in hand at the end of the day. But still we are hopeful because Shaiful scored a fifty in the first innings while Naeem is yet to bat," said Jahirul when asked whether it would be possible for his side to save the match on 172 for six.

"You never know what can happen in cricket. Still it is possible to draw the match if we can spend time in the middle for two sessions on the final day. The first session will be crucial for us and we must play the first session without any damage," he added.

Jahirul said that he could have prolonged his innings if he had avoided playing too many shots and dealt with spinner Graeme Swann more carefully. "Actually I stepped into a trap. I was a little bit excited as it's my first match and I went to bat on the back of a duck. I wanted to get back my confidence by playing some shots but it was not my plan to hit sixes," he said about his innings.

"I played a lot of four-day matches but Test cricket is a totally

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UDRS in next Test series

Cricket

ATIQUA ANAM

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) president AHM Mustafa Kamal has assured that the Umpire Decision Review System (UDRS) will be in place from the next home Test series in Bangladesh which is in October against New Zealand.

Clarifying that the non-installation of the UDRS in the current series against England had nothing to do with finance rather it was a matter of the intricacy of the system that barred from it being installed, the BCB supremo said they are working with the broadcasters and others involved to make sure that the logistics are there for the next Test series. He said all these to reporters at the press box of the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium while accompanying International Cricket Council (ICC) president David Morgan yesterday.

"We have been talking about the UDRS issue, but we found that other countries have not been using it extensively, so we thought that, first of all, we must know about the system itself. It is very delicate and if we misused it, it might go against us. There was also the matter of agreement with broadcasters involved," said the BCB chief.

"Now we have taken up the matter with the broadcasters and everybody has agreed that in

time for the New Zealand tour, everything will be in place."

Such an affirmative response from the person-in-charge was the demand of the hour after the blasting by Bangladesh skipper Shakib Al Hasan the previous day for BCB's failure to have the technology in place for the current series.

The whole series against England, starting from the one-dayers has been dogged with contentious decisions. The most frustrating fact was that the hosts have been in the receiving end for most of those shocking decisions.

A fuming Bangladesh coach Jamie Siddons claimed at the end of third day's play that three or four decisions went against his side which only justified his opposite number Andy Flower's pre-series remark that more influential teams tend to get the rub of the green in marginal decisions.

The ICC president refuted such indication but at the same time he felt Bangladesh might have been better off with the UDRS in place than not and admitted that he was not pleased with the standard of umpiring in the series.

"I cannot accept that any of our international or elite umpires are biased. This game will be monitored in Dubai, and the match referee here is monitoring umpires' performances as well. We will also listen to the captain of Bangladesh and the coach, but their views will not necessarily be regarded as value judgments at the end of the day," said Morgan.

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Mohammedans fight today

Ctg Abahani Win

SPORTS REPORTER

Chittagong Abahani completed their first-leg campaign of the Bangladesh League with a victory when the hosts defeated Rahmatganj MFS 1-0 in the last match of the first leg at the MA Aziz Stadium in Chittagong yesterday.

Meanwhile, the last match of the first-leg between Mohammedan SC and Chittagong Mohammedan will be held at the MA Aziz Stadium at 4:30pm today.

Striker Sakawat Hossain Rony found the back of the Rahmatganj net in the stoppage time of the second half to help the Sky Blues post their third victory on home soil and overall fourth in 12 matches.

At the Birshreshtha Shaheed Mostafa Kamal Stadium here in Kamalapur, hosts Muktiyoddha Sangsad were held to a 1-1 draw by visitors Beanibazar SC, who went ahead in the 22nd minute

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Bresnan sniffs victory

SPORTS REPORTER

It all looked so bright for Bangladesh when they built a first innings total of 419, but by the end of Day Four England took a strangling hold on the match courtesy of some rearguard batting and some spirited bowling performance later.

In the morning England stretched their lead over Bangladesh to a sizeable 77 runs before being all out for 496 runs. A gritty and gutsy knock of 91 runs from Tim Bresnan helped England take the lead. He later took the wicket of Mahmudullah Riyad as the Tigers slumped to 172 for six by the end of yesterday. And the 25-year-old paceman believes a second victory in the two Test series is round the corner for England.

"I think four quick wickets tomorrow and we chase 150 and win," said Bresnan adding, "We'll see how it goes but that's how we've set it up. We will be chasing a total, I have a feeling about that, especially after getting the key wicket of Mushfiqur [Rahim]. We've got a nightwatchman in tomorrow and then Naeem [Islam], who'll hang in a bit, but if we can get them out, we are sniffing a win."

Bresnan was smelling a maiden century before his oft-rushed-of-blood against a flighted delivery from Abdur Razzak left his castle empty only to be taken care of by keeper Mushfiqur. But the paceman who considers himself as a genuine all-rounder and after an innings like that has every reason to do so, said he was pleased to have made a good contribution to the team's

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What to WATCH

- SuperSport5**
Bangladesh v England
Second Test, Day 5
Live from 9:30am
Primera Liga
Barcelona v Osasuna
Live from 1:00am (Thursday)
- SuperSport2**
Indian Premier League
Kings XI Punjab v Rajasthan Royals
Live from 8:30pm
- ESPN**
Sportscentre India
Sports News
Live at 8:30pm
German FA Cup
FC Schalke 04 v Bayern Munich
Live from 12:25am (Thursday)
- STAR Sports**
English Premier League
Aston Villa v Sunderland
Live from 1:40am (Thursday)
- SuperSport3**
English Premier League
Portsmouth v Chelsea
Live from 1:30am (Thursday)

Afridi named T20 captain

AFP, Lahore

Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) on Tuesday named all-rounder Shahid Afridi as captain for next month's World Twenty20, in which the embattled team are hoping to defend their title in the West Indies.

The 30-year-old was tipped favourite to lead the side, but his reputation suffered a blow when he was slapped with a two-match ban for tampering after being caught biting the ball during a match against Australia last month.

Afridi vowed to carry the team to victory after the PCB announced his appointment.

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Bangalore crush Chennai

STAR SPORT DESK

Royal Challengers Bangalore went top of the table with eight points beating mid-table Chennai Super Kings by 36 runs in their IPL encounter yesterday.

Batting first, Bangalore posted a daunting total of 171 runs for the loss of five wickets, courtesy of a hurricane 68-run knock from Robin Uthappa that came off just 38 deliveries. There were few other useful contributions throughout the order. Muttiah Muralidaran took three for 25.

Bangalore's medium pacer Vinay Kumar then took four for 40 as Chennai limped to 135 for seven at the end of their twenty overs. Matthew Hayden and S Badrinath chipped in with decent scores,

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PHOTO: STAR

Retiring former Bangladesh captain Habibul Bashar (R) receives a memento from the incumbent Shakib Al Hasan at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium yesterday.

ICL was a big mistake: Bashar

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Habibul Bashar wanted to have a smooth exit but one 'big mistake' made sure it was a silent one.

Well it was not entirely quiet in the end as the sports journalists gave the former Bangladesh captain a standing ovation that was both heart-warming and timely.

The former Bangladesh captain who announced on Monday of his retirement from all forms of cricket, held a press conference at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium yesterday.

His legacy as a cricketer and a Bangladesh captain received a major blow when he decided to join the rebel Indian Cricket League (ICL) in 2008 and the man himself admitted it could have been a huge error in judgment.

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Siddons fined

AFP, Dhaka

Bangladesh coach Jamie Siddons was on Tuesday fined 10 percent of his match fee for showing dissent at an umpire's decision during the ongoing second and final Test against England in Dhaka.

"Jamie became increasingly frustrated and let his emotions out during the second session of day three (Monday), which was obvious for all to see," International Cricket Council match-referee Jeff Crowe said in a statement.

"Clearly he behaved inappropriately and he agrees that such actions and gestures must be kept behind closed doors.

"He is disappointed with himself that he was so public and he did not hesitate in pleading guilty and accepting the proposed sanction."

BANGLADESH LEAGUE Transfer window opens today

SPORTS REPORTER

The mid-term players' transfer window for the Bangladesh League opens today at the Bangladesh Football Federation House.

The window will remain open for three days for the booters who are currently playing in the ongoing professional football league. But it will continue upto March 30 for the players, both local and foreigners, who have yet to register with a team, said a BFF press release yesterday.

MIRPUR MASALA

MOHAMMAD ISAM

In a true sense, Shakib Al Hasan has now taken over the mantle of Mohammad Rafique's role as Bangladesh's leading spinner.

Shakib bowled 66 overs, of which 27 were maiden, and the left-arm spinner conceded 124 runs for four wickets.

He broke Rafique's record for most number of overs bowled in a Test innings by a Bangladeshi bowler in England's first innings of the Mirpur Test yesterday.

Rafique, the retired left-armed bowler 59.1 overs in an innings, picking up six wickets against New Zealand in 2004.

While it took six years for the feat to be broken, it wasn't surprising that another left-arm spinner rewrote it.

SIXTO START

He lasted only six balls in his first innings as a Test player where he failed to open his account. So when Jahirul Islam faced his sixth ball in the second innings, he must have had his heart in his mouth. Admittedly nervous, Jahirul charged Graeme Swann and spanked him over mid-on for six, his first runs in Tests.

It probably was a unique way to open one's Test account, almost like getting a wicket in the first over of a debut Test.

From recent memory, West Indies opener Dale Richards slammed a six to score his first Test runs when he pulled Mashrafe Bin Mortaza over midwicket in St Vincent last July.

And perhaps there are not many more.

CATCH OF THE DAY

The lack of crowd in this Test match hardly stopped the ticket touts from doing business outside the gates.

It was not different yesterday but to add a new twist, complimentary tickets issued by the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) were sold in the black market.

Two touts were caught red-handed in the afternoon when they tried to sell clubhouse tickets, handed out to board directors, councilors, sports clubs and various other institutions.

According to one of the accused, he was given three tickets (serial numbers 882, 892

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DAY'S EVENT

Bangladesh v England
Second Test, Day 5
Time: 9:30am
Venue: Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium
Bangladesh League
Mohammedan v Ctg
Mohammedan
Time: 4:30pm
Venue: MA Aziz Stadium, Chittagong