

SPORTS PERSONALITY OF 2011

Staying on top

SAKEB TAHSIN SUBHAN

For Shakib Al Hasan, 2011 has ended in much the same way as it began, with his status as Bangladesh cricket's most valuable and accomplished player not only intact, but enhanced. In between though, were periods of tumult he would not have experienced before.

While he won acclaim through his sustained brilliance as the Tigers' go-to man and with his stints with the Kolkata Knight Riders and Worcestershire, at home there were troughs: the mixed bag that was the World Cup and losing the national captaincy after the Zimbabwe debacle.

There were also the occasional moments of what can best be termed as arrogance, such as his gesture to the crowd after Bangladesh were dismissed for 58 by West Indies in Mirpur during the World Cup.

Through it all Shakib has maintained the one aspect that he should be judged on -- his performances on the field. And what could be a better end to a challenging year than to sign it off as the world's number one all-rounder in both Tests and ODIs?

His demotion from the captaincy could well be a blessing as being the best player and the man responsible for making all the on-field decisions and facing the media during the frequent failures, could have been proving taxing.

Perhaps this freedom empowered him to put in arguably his greatest performance on the international stage -- the 144 and 6-82 against Pakistan in his last Test of the year.

During that innings, he displayed a characteristic his teammates should take to heart. In the last series, against the West Indies, Shakib was guilty of playing a very irresponsible shot when in partnership with Mushfiqur Rahim he seemed to be steering the match, and the series, to an honourable draw. He came in for considerable flak because of his indiscretion.

Instead of sulking, Shakib put together one of the most assured and mature Test innings ever played by Bangladesh batsman. This hints at clarity of thought that seems all too often to elude his teammates, including that other superstar of Bangladesh cricket, Tamim Iqbal.

All told, 2011 is the year that has cemented Shakib's status as a leading light in world cricket's collective consciousness. His last act for the year has only served to engrave that impression deeper.

Shakib enters 2012 as the cricketer all his teammates must try to emulate, and as the Bangladeshi sportsman most likely to continue his upward trajectory in the international arena.



SHAKIB AL HASAN

It's that time of the year again. The holidays are upon us and thus it gives us ample time to reflect upon the year just past. But this has been no normal year for Bangladesh sports. With a World Cup hosted on home soil along with a golfer who travels all over the world and a group of women who have earned us the ODI status, it was not easy to pick nominees for our usual year end award; The Sports Personality of the Year 2011.

So on the first week of December 2011, The Daily Star Sport put the heads of its twelve members together and brainstormed to create and publish a shortlist of five sportspersons who have achieved the most in the calendar year of 2011. The voting was democratic. Each member submitted their list of top five and via a simple tally the final five were chosen. There was only a single criterion; the nominees would have to be Bangladeshi or would have to ply their trade for a significant amount of time in Bangladesh.

So after doing the hard work in coming up with the shortlist, we did what any democracy would do -- open it up for a public vote. The rest was up to you and you responded in kind. This is the result.

Who is Bangladesh's sports personality of 2011?

SHAKIB AL HASAN
43.2%

SIDDIKUR RAHMAN
41.1%

KHADIZA TUL KUBRA
11.9%

MUSHFIQUR RAHIM
2.5%

SALMA KHATUN
1.4%

Total Votes:
3,315

Finding his feet

QUAZI ZULQUARNAIN ISLAM

Classic second season syndrome, would be how football lovers describe Siddikur Rahman's second season in the golfing circuit. Riding the initial wave of optimism during a trail-blazing first season, the ward of Madaripur and the Kurmitola Golf Club in the capital beat all odds, social and geographical, to claim an Asian Tour event.

That win in Brunei brought a rapidly rising Siddikur into the public attention and affection and great things were expected in 2011. Unfortunately, this year has been more about Siddikur finding his feet as a cynical professional and as such consolidation has been the name of the game.

There have been no tour wins in 2011 and there were some startling lows too, that of Macau and Hong Kong. There have been some highs too; earning a solid 18th place finish in the Omega European Masters.

Most importantly there has been a steady progression, one that signals to that of a player who is setting his stall out, slowly and steadily to play this game successfully for a long time. Siddikur himself admitted as much, in an interview with The Daily Star Sport a couple of months ago, saying, 'I want to continue playing the game throughout the rest of my life'.

It is indeed possible. Golfers who maintain a rigorous physical routine can keep playing well into their 50s and 60s and comparatively, Siddikur at 27 is the bubbly new kid on the block. Who is to say he cannot continue on this same vein for another two decades barring any major mishaps?



SIDDIKUR RAHMAN

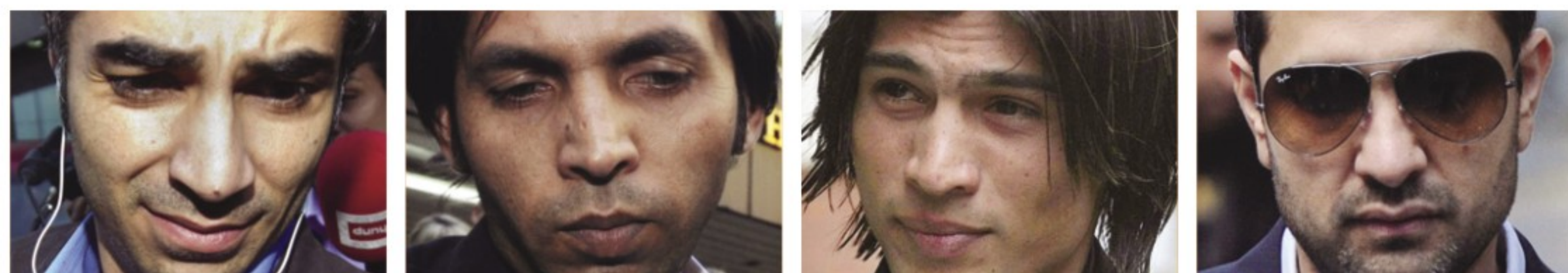
MOMENTS THAT MATTERED



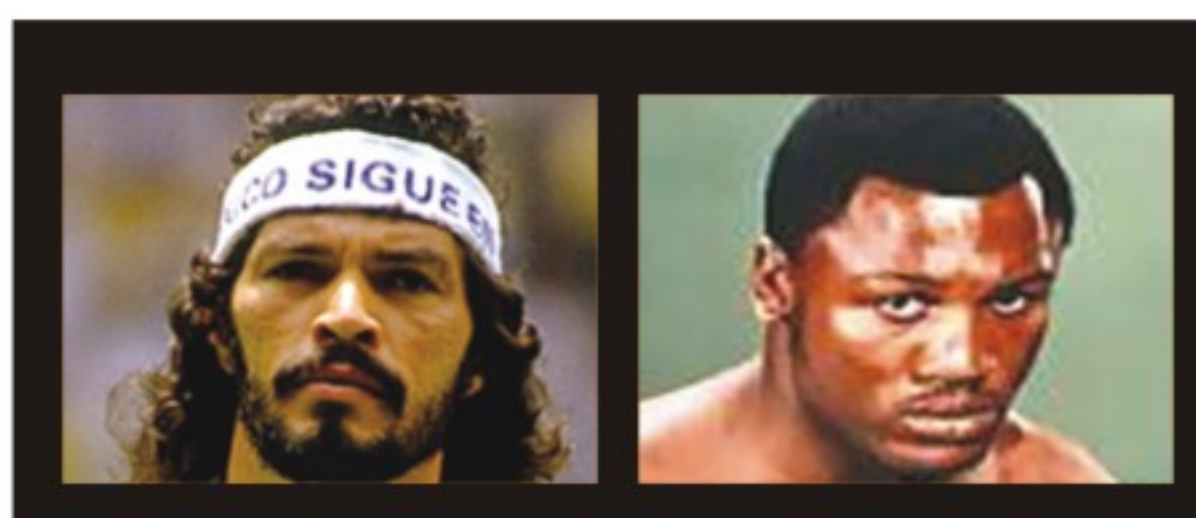
India won the Cricket World Cup defeating Sri Lanka in the final ending a long 28-year wait for their second trophy.



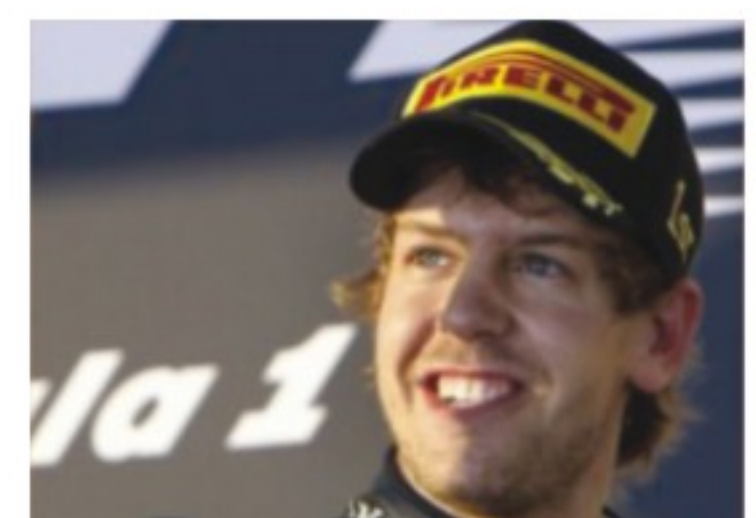
Argentina and Barcelona superstar Lionel Messi captained his country in an international friendly against Nigeria at the Bangabandhu National Stadium in Dhaka.



Pakistan cricketers (L-R) Salman Butt, Mohammad Asif and Mohammad Aamer were punished for their role in the spot-fixing scandal receiving jail terms in England for 2 and half years, 1 year and 6 months respectively. Their agent Mazhar Majeed was also jailed.



Two great sports icon passed away -- Brazil football legend Socrates and boxing superstar Joe Frazier.



Sebastian Vettel dominated the Formula One circuit.