

SPORT

Tigers draw Gazi Test



NAIMUL KARIM *from Ctg*

A maiden Test century on Day 4 and a brilliantly devised hatrick on Day 5 made Shohag Gazi the first-ever cricketer to take a five-

for, a hatrick and score a hundred in a Test match in the history of the game.

Truth be told, the first Test, played on a flat deck at the Zohur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium, would have lost half of its lustre if it was not for Gazi's epic all-round performance. He followed his unbeaten 101 on Saturday with figures of 6 for 77 yesterday.

In terms of results, the match ended as a tame draw, with Bangladesh finishing on 173 for 3 in their chase of 256 for a win in 46 overs. But for Gazi it was a career-changing story -- a story that he would perhaps go on to tell his grandchildren!

The story unfolded in the second ball of the 85th over when the off-spinner bowled a delivery around middle and leg that trapped Corey Anderson plumb in front.

The gangling tweaker then removed first innings centurion Bradley-John Watling to become only the second Bangladeshi cricketer after Shakib Al Hasan to claim a century and five wickets in an innings.

Watling, who was surprised by the bounce, induced a thin edge that wicketkeeper Mushfiquir Rahim collected after the ball had bounced off his neck.

The final wicket witnessed a drama only seen in the movies. A similar delivery, from around the wicket which went on with the arm produced an edge off Doug Bracewell. The ball bounced off Mushfiquir's pads and was collected inches from the ground behind the keeper by a diving Shakib.

The match stopped briefly with the Bangladeshi fielders all over Gazi, celebrating the rare feat. The visitors eventually declared on 287 for 7.

Bangladesh's openers did not show any clear intent on chasing down the stiff target, with the first 15 overs producing just 39 runs. Openers Tamim Iqbal and Anamul Haque safely negotiated the new ball before the Tigers suffered a mini collapse. Anamul lofted a catch to cover in the 16th over, Tamim was similarly dismissed for 46 in the 34th over. Debutant Marshall Ayub scored his first six in international cricket off Bruce Martin before being trapped in front by Ish Sodhi with 13 overs remaining in the day.

However, Shakib (50 not out) and Mominul Haque (22 not out) played out the rest of the overs, mixing caution with aggression. Shakib hit three fours and three sixes and reached his half-century before the match was mutually called off.

Earlier, the fifth day, which began 30 minutes before schedule in order to make up for the time lost on Saturday due to the late afternoon shower, saw Peter Fulton reach his 50 in the 48th over with an aggressive charge down the wicket off Abdur Razzak. He was however trapped in front while attempting a sweep off Gazi in the 57th over.

Kane Williamson, who began the day on 28, too reached his 50 before being unconventionally caught at short leg. He saw his mistimed pull shot got firmly stuck in between Anamul's legs.

Both Brendan McCullum and Ross Taylor decided to up the rate after lunch. However, Gazi weaved his magic once the second new ball was taken and made the Test his own.

Runs	Min	Balls	4s	6s	S/R
101 no	232	161	10	3	62.73

HATRICK HAUL

Anderson lbw b Gazi 8

Watling c Mushfiquir b Gazi 0

Bracewell c Shakib b Gazi 0

INNINGS WICKETS

O	M	R	W
26	4	77	6

MATCH WICKETS

O	M	R	W
58	10	156	8



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A class of his own

NAIMUL KARIM *from Chittagong*

Before yesterday there were 38 instances where players took hatricks in Test cricket and along with that there were 28 instances where a player scored a century and took five wickets in the same match.

But yesterday, Shohag Gazi has created a league of his own. His treble might have become the 39th or his ton became the 29th instances, but no other player has taken three wickets with consecutive deliveries in a Test on top of a century and a five-for ever before.

The last few years have seen many Bangladeshi cricketers transcend boundaries with their individual performances, but Shohag's record easily tops that list.

While Shakib Al Hasan did score a 144 and finished with figures of 6 for 82 against Pakistan in 2011, he did not get a hatrick. The left-hander might have missed out on the record but he surely did ensure that Shohag gets his hatrick.

The fourth ball of the 85th over, which completed the sequence, saw Shohag's delivery induce an edge from Bracewell, deflect off Mushfiquir Rahim's pads and go in the air for a few seconds. The ball was about to fall just short of first slip; but Shakib was quick enough to dive from leg slip to grab the ball inches above the ground.

"I could not have even imagined what he [Shakib] did there. I never really expected him to take the catch. I was actually a bit stunned [after the ball hit Mushfiquir's pads], everything was going in slow motion and I thought he had no chance," an excited Gazi told reporters at the post-match conference.

"But at the end of the day he got to the ball right in time. I have to give him 99 per cent of the credit for my hatrick," he added.

According to Gazi, there was no special planning for the last wicket. The captain had the field ready and he just went in and bowled.

"I did not have any discussion with the captain; I just tried to bowl to my field. I did not bowl the fourth ball on any particular spot or look for any cracks on the pitch either. I just went in and bowled, thank God it happened," exclaimed Gazi, informing that his parents had become very emotional after he scored his century.

The Bangladesh national team spent much of the last few months working on their fitness. There were a number of players whose fitness levels were in question back then and Gazi was one of them. The bowler had therefore stated the need to prove himself in the match, something he believes he has done in the first Test.

As he himself puts it, "People talked about my fitness before the match so I had a point to prove."

He also thanked Bangladesh's part-time spin consultant, Saqlain Mushtaq, who could not join the camp in this series.

"His guidance has been very important, at least to me, because he helped me learn how to bowl on these pitches which have no turn," he said.

Following the record, the question remains as to what kind of a player Gazi describes himself as, a bowler or an all-rounder?

To that the 22-year-old said, "It feels good to be called an all-rounder. But really to me, at this time the team is what matters. In moments like these the team needs a batsman to bat at eight and I am glad I could help."



HISTORY IN THE MAKING AT CHITTAGONG: (L to R) Corey Anderson plays and misses only to be adjudged leg before off Shohag Gazi. One down, two more to go. Bradley Watling looks back as Bangladesh wicketkeeper Mushfiquir Rahim juggles before gobbling his faint nick. Two down, one more to go. Shakib Al Hasan pops up in the frame from nowhere to pluck the ball inches off the ground to complete a magnificent hatrick. A proud Gazi (top) displays the red cherry after his unique feat that made him the first player ever to score a century and claim a hatrick in the history of Test cricket.

PHOTOS: ANURUP KANTI DAS

Unchanged squad for 2nd Test

SPORTS REPORTER

The 14-member squad for the second and final Test against New Zealand has been kept unchanged as the selection committee yesterday announced the same 14 players for the second Test which starts at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur, Dhaka on October 21.

SQUAD

Mushfiquir Rahim (captain), Mahmud Ullah (vice captain), Anamul Haque, Tamim Iqbal, Shakib Al Hasan, Nasir Hossain, Abdur Razzak, Sohag Gazi, Rubel Hossain, Muminul Hoque, Marshall Ayub, Robiul Islam, Naeem Islam, Al Amin Hossain

Result pleases both captains

SPORTS REPORTER *from Chittagong*



Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium yesterday, both captains stated that a draw was a fair reflection of the way the teams performed throughout the five days.

Bangladesh captain Mushfiquir Rahim stated that the hosts were disappointed to have settled for a draw in the first Test match. He was however, happy with the way Mominul Haque and Shohag Gazi performed in the match.

Speaking to reporters at the post-match press conference, Mushfiquir said, "We are disappointed to have had to settle for a draw. It was an opportunity, and if the wicket was any different, it would have been a different ball game for our spinners.

We could have used our full strength then. But full credit to New Zealand, they played well."

He further stated that the draw would help the side in developing a 'winning' culture in Test cricket.

"But we want to look at our overall result. The culture that we want to develop is of winning or drawing, and not just focusing on individual performances," Mushfiquir said.

The captain further said that Shohag Gazi, who scored a hundred and took a five-for, was the game-changer.

"He gave us the lead in the first innings which was crucial. I have seen him hit around before, but he batted very smartly in this innings. He controlled himself as per the field. He added 100-odd runs with Robiul Islam. It was a matured innings," he said.

With regards to Shohag's bowling, Mushfiquir said, "Gazi's spell was just amazing. I was hoping that I

could take the catch [hatrick wicket], but unfortunately I couldn't. To be honest, I am very happy for him. He really needed it."

The game saw the likes of Shakib Al Hasan and Robiul Islam uncharacteristically bowl lesser than the others. The plan, according to the captain, was to help them ease their way into Test cricket, since both of them had suffered from injuries before the series.

New Zealand captain, Brendan McCullum said that the game helped the players adjust to the conditions and they were looking forward to the next Test.

"From our point of view in the last five days we had a good head out, lots of guys had a good run on the field and had an opportunity to get the bat in hand. I think we played well and at the end of the day a draw was a fair result," said McCullum.

While he was happy with the draw, he did however state that the visitors

were pushing for a win till the last day. "From the way we batted after lunch [aggressively] we had a target in mind. For us it was about giving our seamers the right amount of overs to get the wickets. So in the end we were happy about setting a target of 250 in 46 overs for them," he said.

McCullum was particularly happy about the way they batted. He, however, stated that the visitors needed to work on their fielding. There were a few crucial catches the Kiwis dropped in the match, some of which could have prevented Shohag from reaching his century.

"I think our batting was certainly positive, to win the toss and put 460 against a good spin line-up was really positive. We can improve on our fielding, we were a bit patchy," he said.

"Our seamers were outstanding throughout and the spinners just got better as the Test match went on," McCullum added.

BD-NZ SCOREBOARD

NEW ZEALAND: First innings 469 (Fulton 73, Williamson 114, Watling 103, Boult 52 not out; Razzak 3-147, Gazi 2-79, Shakib 2-89)	Gazi 26 4 77 6
BANGLADESH: First innings 501 (Ayub 25, Mominul 181, Mushfiquir 67, Nasir 45, Gazi 101 not out, Robiul 33; Bracewell 3-96, Boult 2-50, Anderson 2-34)	Shakib 9 1 19 0
NEW ZEALAND: Second innings (overnight 117-1)	Nasir 9 4 20 1
Fulton lbw b Gazi 59	Robiul 4 1 9 0
Rutherford lbw b Nasir 32	Mominul 4 0 10 0
Williamson c Anamul b Gazi 74	BANGLADESH: Second innings
Taylor not out 54	Tamim c Williamson b Martin 46
McCullum b Gazi 22	Anamul c Anderson b Martin 18
Anderson lbw b Gazi 8	Ayub lbw b Sodhi 31
Watling c Mushfiquir b Gazi 0	Mominul not out 22
Bracewell c Shakib b Gazi 0	Shakib not out 50
Sodhi not out 22	Extras: (b-2, nb-4) 6
Extras: (b-11, lb-4, nb-1) 16	Total: (For 3 wkts in 48.2 overs) 173
Total: (For 7 wkts dec in 90 overs) 287	Did not bat: Mushfiquir, Nasir, Gazi, Razzak, Robiul, Rubel.
Fall of wickets: 1-48, 2-149, 3-200, 4-250, 5-260, 6-260, 7-260.	Fall of wickets: 1-39, 2-99, 3-101.
Bowler O M R W	Bowler O M R W
Razzak 32 5 116 0	Boult 4 1 9 0
Rubel 6 0 21 0	Bracewell 5 0 14 0
	Anderson 2 2 0 0
	Williamson 10 3 24 0
	Martin 16 4 62 2
	Sodhi 10.2 1 57 1
	Taylor 1 0 5 0
	Result: Match drawn.
	Player-of-the-match: Shohag Gazi.