

# A 'special achievement'

NAIMUL KARIM



The one major difference between Bangladesh's series wins against New Zealand in 2010 and the one this year is the kind of wicket that the two series have been played on.

While the 4-0 series win was achieved on wickets that were mostly slow and low, the wins this year took place on pitches that offered more bounce and seemed to assist the pacers.

It was for this reason that coach Shane Jurgensen, despite the two rather comfortable wins, termed this year's series win a 'special achievement'.

"I suppose in the first game the wicket was reasonably bouncy, which was a bit of a surprise but I was very impressed with the way we adapted to the wicket," said Jurgensen.

"In both the games we had to face some really difficult scenarios with the bat and the ball, especially in the first game where it bounced a lot and their tall bowlers had hit the deck hard, but I am extremely happy with the way our bowlers bowled," he added.

Utilising the rather 'surprising' wicket was Bangladesh's pacers, who played major roles in the wins. The coach believes that the pacers' success reflects the management's hard work with the bowlers for the last two years.

"I am extremely happy. It feels like two years in the making for me as a bowling coach. Also I can't talk about everything that happened but we had a lot of issues going on behind the team, apart from losing Shafiul [Islam] and Shakib [Al Hasan] and that's what perhaps caps off these two wins for me," said an excited Jurgensen.

"It makes a big difference when fast bowlers can create pressure at the top. Even if your batting does not come off, all of a sudden you can win," he added.

Another positive for Jurgensen has been that both his pacers -- who are prone to injuries -- remain fully fit. Mashrafe had suffered a heel injury during the Bangladesh Premier League a month later. Rubel underwent a shoulder injury two years ago and has been working to get back to top form since.

"Mashrafe has had no niggles after the match. He has played the entire series without any pain and that's a massive effort from him," said Jurgensen.

"It's taken Rubel two years to hit form ever since his surgery and I think all of a sudden he is got his speed and control back. For me he has been the quickest bowler of the series. Even his own teammates were a bit surprised with his pace," he added.

And the coach predicts the competition among the pacers to become fiercer once the bowlers nursing injuries join the team. "There's going to



PACE PACKAGE: Rubel Hossain and Mashrafe Bin Mortaza

be more soon, when Taskin [Ahmed] gets in next and hopefully [Abul Hasan] Raju over the next three to four months," he said.

This is the second time that Bangladesh have won an ODI series without Shakib Al Hasan since his arrival on the scene and that, according to the coach, represents the growing hunger for success among the players in the dressing room.

"There's a lot of competition for spots now. [Anamul Haque] Bijoy missed out, Jahurul [Islam] missed out. Naeem [Islam] worked hard to get back. There's going to be more soon. There's Marshall [Ayub], Soumya Sarker and Sabbir Rumman... so that's just fantastic," said Jurgensen.

Under Jurgensen, this is Bangladesh's second series win after the 3-2 victory over the West Indies last year. While the West Indian series seemed a more hard-fought score-line, Jurgensen rates the win over the Kiwis as highly.

"New Zealand were coming here for revenge, absolutely no doubt about that. They beat England and South Africa plus they are a very good one-day team, so I rate this win very highly as well," exclaimed Jurgensen.

# 'Bangladesh deserved 2-0'

SPORTS REPORTER



The Bangladesh pace attack did not feature significantly in pre-series discussions, but the experienced Mashrafe Bin Mortaza along with Rubel Hossain seized the spotlight in Bangladesh's series win against New Zealand. If the batting was not fully satisfactory in the first two games, it was reasonable, but it was the pace duo who condemned the Kiwis to two heavy defeats at Mirpur. And it was none other than New Zealand fast bowling coach Shane Bond, a former fearsome but injury-prone paceman, who highly praised the performance of the Bangladesh pace bowlers.

"I know Mashrafe is a good new ball bowler and quite an experienced bowler, he had an injury but he looks fit and he is bowling fast and he has bowled well. Rubel gave us a demonstration of exactly how to bowl on that wicket and in those conditions. I thought he was exceptional. So no I am not surprised; the guys (Rubel and Mashrafe) have set the tone for the team up front and we always knew that the spinners were going to be a challenge. They have done a great job supporting the spinners. As a bowling unit, even though I think we had bowled okay, I think they bowled better than us," said Bond when asked about whether he was surprised by the performance of the pace bowlers.

He was however more impressed with the way the home team responded under pressure for what he believe Bangladesh deserve the 2-0 lead in the three-match series.

"We played some good cricket in patches, but not for long enough. There were times when we had Bangladesh under pressure and they responded very well. They totally deserve their 2-0 lead," opined the former Kiwi fast bowler.

Bond said that the Tigers have come a long way but he stressed that they needed good performances in differing conditions.

"The World Cup is in New Zealand and Australia and the next time in England, although Bangladesh will be very difficult at home conditions, but the biggest challenge is how they will go when the wickets are a bit faster and bouncier. If they can get exposed to those kinds of wickets, history has seen what Sri Lanka has achieved. There is no doubt about Bangladesh's passion for cricket and the talent; they will be a force wherever they play in the world," he said.

New Zealand had initially avoided talk about the repeat of the 2010 ghost but now it seems a reality for them. "Oh yeah we talk about this and stuff. We talk about the learnings from the last series and what you'd do different, but that doesn't change the fact that if the opposition still out-plays you, you get beaten. We have got a good side, we just need to play better," Bond responded when asked whether they are apprehensive about the possibility of a whitewash.



Bangladesh's ace golfer Siddikur Rahman addresses a press conference at the Sonargaon Hotel yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

# Siddikur hopes for more of the same

SPORTS REPORTER



Ace Bangladesh golfer Siddikur Rahman wants to maintain his strong recent performances when he takes part in the ISPS Handa World Cup of Golf, which is scheduled for November 21-24 at the Royal Melbourne Golf Club in Melbourne, Australia.

Siddikur, who has been selected for the World Cup of Golf with his current world ranking of 251, is the first Bangladesh golfer to play the World Cup where a total of 60 top golfers, including 13 from Asia, will be playing the 7-million dollar individual event.

Ninth on the Order of Merit in Asia, Siddikur is very excited to be part of the World Cup after his three previous attempts in the qualifying round saw him return empty-handed.

"I am very excited that I am going to participate in the World Cup of Golf for the first time. Participating in the World Cup without playing the qualifying round is a pleasure as three Bangladeshi golfers including me earlier failed to qualify for the World Cup in three attempts," said Siddikur at a press conference arranged by his sponsor, Grameenphone, who has been with Siddikur since 2003.

While some new rules of the International Federation of PGA Tours helped Siddikur earn the ticket to the World Cup, the 29-year old did write his own fate

by improving his world ranking (only the top 300 golfers are considered for the World Cup) through some brilliant performances in the recent past.

"I always play for achievements and I want to produce a good result in my first appearance in the World Cup. To do it, I have to maintain the performance that I put up in the last five tournaments. I am confident of doing that, especially with the way I have been playing in the recent past," said Siddikur, who entered the professional circuit in 2007 and came into the limelight after winning the Brunei Open in 2010.

Since then Siddikur has been somewhat inconsistent. He admitted that he has been struggling to perform in the final round and he is working with swing coach, nutritionist and psychologist to overcome it.

The man from Madaripur has played 17 tournaments so far this year till October and is supposed to play six more tournaments including the World Cup over next two months. His best results this year have been third-place finishes in both Mercuries Taiwan Masters and SAIL-SBI Open, fifth place in Chiangmai Golf Classic, seventh in the Venetian Macau Open and eighth in Queen's Cup. He has also finished among the top 20 in 19 tournaments since starting professional golf.

Siddikur will have two tournaments to prepare for the World Cup of Golf as he will leave here for India on Monday to play the Indian Open from Nov 7-10 and then leave for Australia to play the Australian Masters from Nov 14-17.

# Biman bail on chess league

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Biman, 15-time league champions, pulled out of the Premier Division Chess League citing the shortage of budget while Bangladesh Navy enrolled them to the top fight chess following their success in the Bangladesh Games.

The pullout of Biman means there will be no relegation from the Premier Chess League, which gets underway today with the number draw of nine participating team being held at the Bangladesh Chess Federation yesterday.

"Last season Biman struggled to form a better side following the financial problem and this time they did not send their entry, they did not even communicate with us," said BCF joint secretary Morshalin Ahmed, adding that Biman has been relegated to the First Division Chess.

Biman emerged champions in their first appearance in 1980 and kept their momentum to become champions 15 times out of 32 appearances. They had finished runners-up in 2011 but they had a miserable seventh position among ten teams last season.

Not only Biman, last season's runners-up Duranta Rajshahi disappeared from the scene after their maiden appearance as they sold their club to Bangladesh Navy, which included three Grand Masters Reefat Bin Sattar, Enamul Hossain Razib, Abdullah Al Rakib and three FMs Toyebur, Nasir and Aminur and they are set to face holders Mohammadan on the opening day.

Bangladesh Navy won the silver medal in the team event and gold medal in individual event in the Bangladesh Games.

# Gold Cup glory for Rangamati

OUR CORRESPONDENT

Rangamati Sadar Upazila emerged champions in the Deputy Commissioner's Gold Cup with a 1-0 win over Baghaichhari Upazila in the final at Rangamat Chinglah Moung Chowdhury Stadium on Thursday.

Munna Asam struck the all-important goal ten minutes into the second half.

Mohammed Abdullah, divisional commissioner of Chittagong, distributed prizes among the winners while Rangamati Brigade Commander Sarwar Hossain, deputy commissioner of Rangamati Md. Mostofa Kamal, superintended of police Amena Begum and mayor of Rangamati Municipality Saiful Islam Bhutto were present as special guests.

# MSC, Doleshwar register wins

SPORTS REPORTER

<b>MOHAMMEDAN SC:</b> 205 for 8 (Rajin 60; Faisal 2-34)	for 9 (Nafees 58, Imtiaz 54; Sabbir 4-36)
<b>KHELAGHOR SKS:</b> 195 all out in 49.1 overs (Daniel 53, N Ripon 30; Delwar 4-25)	<b>PRIME DOLESHWAR:</b> 257 for 3 (Dawid 83, Rony 57, Mehedi 54, Sabbir 51; Imtiaz 1-46)
<b>Result:</b> Mohammadan won by ten runs.	<b>Result:</b> Prime Doleshwar won by seven wickets.
<b>BROTHERS UNION:</b> 251	

SPORTS REPORTER



Mohammedan Sporting Club and Prime Doleshwar Sporting Club won their respective eighth round Dhaka Premier League matches yesterday. The win put the teams in fifth and second positions respectively.

Mohammedan beat Khelaghor Samaj Kallyan Samiti by ten runs in a close encounter at the BKSP-3 yesterday.

Batting first Mohammedan rode on Rajin Saleh's 60 to post 205 runs. In reply, Khelaghor were bundled out for 195. Daniel Housego's 53 gave Khelaghor some hopes, but Delwar Hassan's four-wicket haul bundled out Khelaghor with five balls remaining.

At the Shaheed Chandu Stadium in Bogra, Brothers Union rode on half-centuries from Nafees Iqbal and Imtiaz Hossain to post 251. That however, was far from enough as Prime Doleshwar gobbled the target with nine overs remaining. Half-centuries from their English recruit, Dawid Malan, Rony Talukdar, Mehedi Maruf and Sabbir, helped them reach their target with ease.

# Tamim doubtful for 3rd ODI

SPORTS REPORTER

After Shakib Al Hasan and Shafiul Islam, it seems that opener Tamim Iqbal might be the latest cricketer to miss out on an ODI on medical grounds. The left-hander is reportedly suffering from pain in his abdomen and played the first two ODIs though the pain.

Tamim went for a medical test at a city hospital yesterday to determine the reason behind the cause. While it is not certain whether Tamim will be rested for the third ODI, the team management despite their aim to complete a three-nil whitewash, might just go on to shuffle their team a bit for the final ODI.

Speaking to The Daily Star, coach Shane Jurgensen said: "I can't predict any changes but, there might be a couple of adjustments, because some players have had a heavy workload."

# 'A dream start'

SPORTS REPORTER

A debut score of 25 is in no way the ideal start to a ODI career, but it was a dream start for the opener Shamsur Rahman who launched his international career during the second ODI against New Zealand. "It's fantastic because the team not only won the match but also clinched the series in my debut match, so you can say it's a dream start for me," said Shamsur yesterday, a leisure day for most of the Tigers who spent times with their family.

Shamsur hardly gave reasons to suggest that he could solve the opening problem even though his knock and the 63-run stand with Tamim Iqbal helped his side lay a foundation, but the player himself has belief.

While everybody has been relishing the possibility of a whitewash, Shamsur said that that was not the mood in the camp; instead the Tigers were eager to play their best cricket in the tomorrow's last ODI at the Fatullah Cricket Stadium.

"Actually you people are only talking about the Banglawash and white-wash; we are not thinking about it. Yes, there is a chance but we are thinking match by match and we have to play our best to win the last game, that's all," said the opener.

# Preliminary U-19 squad announced

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) announced a 24-member preliminary Bangladesh Under-19 squad for next month's home series against West Indies Under-19s.

A three-week preparation camp for the series will start from tomorrow at the National Cricket Academy and the selected players have been asked to report today at 5pm.

West Indies Under-19s will arrive in the capital on December 1. Initially there was a plan of seven one-day matches in the series but both parties are working on a four-day match and five one-day matches.

Recently Bangladesh Under-19s toured the Caribbean and won a seven-match one-day series 4-3.