

Mission whitewash

BISHWAJIT ROY



when Bangladesh, leading the three-match series 2-0, play the third and final ODI against New Zealand. As the Tigers have already clinched the series quite convincingly by winning the first two games at Mirpur the match can be written off as a dead rubber, but this match is in fact full of life.

There have already been fights from fans eager to get a ticket, not only because they want the chance to watch an international match in the outskirts of Dhaka after a long break but also to see Mushfiqur Rahim's men hammer the last nail in the Kiwi coffin.

A rare morale-boosting history beckons the Tigers because another whitewash over the Kiwis -- after the 4-0 result in 2010 -- will take Bangladesh to a new height. While a demoralised New Zealand will seek solace from the dead rubber, the home team will need to play their best to make use of an opportunity all too rare in its history.

The Tigers can in no way be complacent and refreshingly, they were not in such a mood.

Mashrafe Bin Mortaza saying in a pre-match press conference yesterday that their performance was not up to the mark in the first two games is a very good and positive sign, hinting at an improving side that is hungry for more success.

"I won't say that we played well and won the matches, we made a lot of mistakes, they made a few more mistakes than us and that's the reason we won. The combined performance has not yet taken place," opined the Narail Express.

The most praised issue in their 2-0 lead was their ability to adapt to different conditions as Mirpur hardly provided a favourable dish this time. Bangladesh can prove themselves further in different conditions at Fatullah.

Nobody is sure about the nature of the surface as initially in this season's Premier

League there were some low-scoring games, although later runs started flowing more freely. A sporting track has been promised, but the Bangladesh team were not focusing on the conditions. They have bitter memories of a nine-wicket defeat against mighty Australian in the last of their four international matches at Fatullah in April 2006 but a lot of water has flown under the bridge since then and the current one is a different team that has a reputation of a competitive ODI unit.

"There is no point thinking about the wicket. For instance before the start of the series, we were thinking that we would bat later, but in both the matches we batted first. I think if we play well the wicket won't matter, but yes if it turns we will get more advantage. We are expecting the wicket to turn, but before everything we need to play



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well," said Mashrafe.

When asked about the prospect of a whitewash, the experienced campaigner said: "We haven't talked about a whitewash, for us winning this match is important, after that we can probably talk about the whitewash, before that we can't talk about it. It is very important to win dominantly, the confidence level increases and will help in upcoming series."

There could be a few changes to the team as opener Tamim Iqbal, complaining of abdominal pain, may sit out the final match.

The Tigers' Mirpur successes brought raised the question of them replicating home successes abroad in different conditions, but that is for later. Today is the day for them to focus on finishing with a 3-0 margin.



PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Bangladesh's fans will hope Nasir Hossain and Mominul Haque, who have so far had a quiet run, to join the party in the final ODI at Fatullah today.

Gazi take top spot

VICTORIA: 251 all out in 46.2 overs

(Jubayer 89 not out, Lasith 59; Nahidul 2-29, Gulbadan 2-47)

SK JAMAL: 245 all out in 49.1 overs

(Chigumbura 91, Junaid 48;

Robiul 4-50)

Result: Victoria won by six runs.

PRIME BANK CC: 191 for 8 (Taiabur 63; Jacob 3-28)

GAZI TANK: 192 for 7 in 48.2 overs (Ashar 68; Rakibul 55; Ravi Bopara 3-33)

Result: Gazi Tank won by three wickets.

SPORTS REPORTER



Gazi Tank Cricketers beat Prime Bank Cricket Club by three wickets at the Shaheed Chandu Stadium at Bogra in the ninth round match yesterday to move to the top of the Dhaka Premier League table with 12 points. Meanwhile at the Shaheed Kamruzzaman Stadium at Rajshahi, Victoria Sporting Club rode on an unbeaten 89 by Jubayer Ahmed to beat Sheikh Jamal by six runs in a close contest.

Prime Bank failed to repeat their previous match's batting performance, as they were restricted to 191 for 8 at Bogra. Taiabur Parvez top-scored with 63. Gazi Tank's Jacob Oram was the pick of the bowlers with

three for 28. In reply, Gazi Tank reached their target in the 49th over, courtesy of half-centuries from their foreign recruit Ashar Zaidi and Rokibul Hassan.

At Rajshahi, Victoria came back from 87 for 4 to post 251 due to Jubayer's unbeaten half-century. Sheikh Jamal who began their chase in a similar way -- reduced to 66 for 5 -- rode on Elton Chigumbura's 91 and Nahidul Islam's 47 to make a late run for the target. They needed six runs in the last over with a wicket remaining. Chigumbura however, was bowled by Robiul Islam off the first ball.

A press release from the Cricket Committee of Dhaka Metropolis stated that the CCDM have temporarily suspended the tenth-round matches, scheduled to start from November 5, due to 'unavoidable circumstances'.

Swadhin Bangla Football team nominated

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) yesterday nominated Swadhin Bangla Football Team for the Independence Day Award 2014 for its contribution during the 1971 War of Liberation.

"Swadhin Bangla Football Team contributed greatly to our liberation war and it hoisted the national flag outside the country, which is why we have nominated it instead of an individual performer," said BFF senior vice president Abdus Salam Murshedy after the BFF executive committee meeting yesterday.

He said that they would send their unique nomination to the National Sports Council (NSC) today.

Earlier, Bangladesh Cricket Board and Bangladesh Ansar got the Independence Day Award.

MSC off to flying start

SPORTS REPORTER

Holders Mohammedan SC's bid to defend the title of the Premier Division Chess League got off to a flying start when the Black and White outfit defeated title contenders and newcomers Bangladesh Navy 3.5-0.5 in their opening game at the Bangladesh Chess Federation Hall Room yesterday.

Mohammedan's Tajik Grand Master Amonatov Farukh, Russian GM Volkov Sergey and local GM Ziaur Rahman beat Navy's FM Taibur Rahman, GM Reefat Bin Sattar and national champion GM Abdullah Al Rakib respectively while IM Minhazuddin Ahmed managed a draw against GM Enamul Hossain Razib of Bangladesh Navy, who enrolled their name to the top-flight chess for the first time.

Transfers now on Nov 15-17

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Hockey Federation (BHF) yesterday declared a fresh date for the inter-club players' transfer from November 15-17 with the season getting under-way from December 16 through the Club Cup tournament.

The decision was taken at the league committee meeting in the presence of eight representatives out of 11 clubs while Mohammedan SC, Dhaka Mariner Youngs Club and Wari Club did not attend the meeting as per their previous decision not to take part in any tournament under the existing committee.

It also decided to start the Premier Division Hockey League from December 26 after the completion of the Victory Day Hockey Tournament which will start from December 16.

"We want all 11 clubs taking part in the league and our effort to bring those clubs is still ongoing," said BHF general secretary Khaza Rahmatullah.

BD archers ousted

SPORTS REPORTER

All Bangladeshi archers -- Emdadul Haque Milon, Roman Sana Sujon and Mathui Pru Mamma -- were eliminated from the elimination round of the 18th Asian Archery Championship after losing to their Chinese Taipei counterparts in Chinese Taipei yesterday.

Milon lost to Ko Cheng Wu 2-6, Sujon lost to Chu Su Wu 0-6 and Mamma lost to Li Cheng Wuang 2-6 the first elimination round.

However, Bangladesh finished ninth in both team and mixed team events, said a press release yesterday.



PHOTO: CRICINFO

Rohit Sharma roars after scoring a scintillating double century against Australia in Bangalore yesterday.

Savage Sharma

India clinch series 3-2 with 57-run win

PTI, Bangalore



provided the perfect Diwali gift to the nation with a 57-run victory in the series-deciding 7th and final ODI against Australia to clinch the rubber 3-2 here yesterday.

The 26-year-old Sharma gave a breathtaking display to power India to an imposing 383 for six before the hosts bowled out Australia for 326 in 45.1 overs at the jam-packed Chinnaswamy Stadium.

The immensely talented Sharma thus became only the third batsman in the history of ODI cricket after Virender Sehwag (219) and Sachin Tendulkar (200 not out) to reach the coveted double ton.

Chasing a mammoth total, Australia made a spirited effort with all-rounder James Faulkner blasting a 73-ball 116, the fastest century by an Australian in ODIs. While Faulkner hit 11 fours and six over-boundaries,

Glenn Maxwell pulverised the Indian bowlers on his way to a 22-ball 60 that contained seven sixes.

Staring at a heavy defeat at 138 for six, Faulkner played a blinder as Australia made a dramatic recovery to give their chase respectability. He was involved in a record ninth wicket stand of 115 runs with Clint McKay.

Earlier, enroute his 158-ball 209, Rohit created a world record by

THE ALL-INDIAN 200-RUN CLUB									
Batsman	Runs	Balls	4s	6s	SR	Team	Opposition	Venue	Date
VSehwag	219	149	25	7	146.97	India	West Indies	Indore	Dec 8, 2011
RSharma	209	158	12	16	132.27	India	Australia	Bangalore	Nov 2, 2013
STendulkar	200 n.o.	147	25	3	136.05	India	South Africa	Gwalior	Feb 24, 2010

hitting as many as 16 sixes along with 12 fours. His effort bettered Shane Watson's previous best of 15 maximums against Bangladesh. Skipper MS Dhoni (62) and Shikhar Dhawan (60) scored brisk half-centuries.

This was also the highest individual ODI score by any batsman against Australia in ODIs as well as being India's highest team total against the visitors. The last five overs produced an unbelievable 101 runs.

This is the first instance when India have won a seven-match ODI series against the Aussies.

While Rohit scored his first 100 off 114 balls, the next hundred came off only 42 deliveries. All the sixes were clean straight hits in the arc between deep extra-cover and deep mid-wicket. There was minimum muscle and maximum timing in each and every six that he hit.

SCORES IN BRIEF

INDIA: 383 for 6 in 50 overs (Rohit 209, Dhoni 62, Dhawan 60, Raina 28; Doherty 2-74)

AUSTRALIA: 326 all out in 45.1 overs (Faulkner 116, Maxwell 60, Watson 49, Haddin 40, Hughes 23; Shami 3-52, Jadeja 3-73)

Result: India won by 57 runs and clinched the 7-ODI series 3-2.

Player-of-the-match: Rohit Sharma. **Player-of-the-series:** Rohit Sharma.

'2-1 sounds better'

SPORTS REPORTER



New Zealand will be looking to prevent giving in to their second successive whitewash against Bangladesh at Fatullah today without their captain

Brendon McCullum, who will not be playing the match due to a sore back. Experienced pace bowler Kyle Mills will be leading the side. Luke Ronchi is likely to replace McCullum in the side.

Despite the absence of their captain, the Black Caps are confident of adding some respectability to the score-line by winning the last game.

"Any time you lose two in a row it is always a disappointment. Your confidence takes a little bit of a hit, but there's one more game in the series, obviously we want to make it 2-1. 2-1 sounds a lot better than 3-0, but we have to play a lot better to make it that way," said Ross Taylor at the pre-match press briefing in Mirpur yesterday.

Taylor believes that winning the last ODI and the T20 would help the Kiwis take the winning momentum into the series against Sri Lanka next month.

"Tomorrow [today] is a new day. If we get a little bit of confidence and win the game, it takes a little bit of confidence into the 20-20 game and hopefully take that to the Sri Lankan series," he said.

This will be the first time that New Zealand will be playing at Fatullah. The visitors have apparently spoken to Jacob Oram, who had played a Dhaka Premier League match their recently, and they expect the wicket to be slow and low.

"I have never been there. This will be the first time that I will be playing international cricket on a ground where I'll be turning up on the day of the match. We would be expecting the wicket to be low and slow again and probably, get worse as the day goes on. Obviously that's what Jacob said, though it might be a totally different wicket, we have to wait and see," said Taylor.

Despite New Zealand's bad run in the series so far, the Kiwis could be happy with the performances of some of their youngsters in the side.

Corey Anderson has been both among the wickets and the runs in the series. He has taken six wickets and scored 83 runs in the first two ODIs. James Neesham too impressed with his two four-wicket hauls in the series. That has been a bright spot for the Kiwis, according to Taylor.

"We have been screaming for a genuine allrounder since Jacob Oram retired. Corey has in it on this tour so far, he has been very consistent. James obviously has a lot of potential too. With continuous progression, they will be a force to



The Black Caps will have to 'up their game' at Fatullah today, if they want to avoid a 'Bangla-wash' in the ODI series.

PHOTO: STAR