

SPORT



BROTHERS IN ARMS: The Tigers join shoulders for a victory lap after completing the 3-0 ODI series victory over New Zealand at the Fatullah Stadium in Narayanganj yesterday.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

I feel fantastic, it was an amazing win, woo hoo! This was a good cricket wicket, didn't turn a lot, I think it's a testament to the guys' improvement to chase down a big target. This is the stuff that we need to do more often. And it's going to prepare us and give us a lot of confidence so that we can do this from now on, and even in the 2015 World Cup.

Shane Jurgensen

BISHWAJIT ROY



When Shohag Gazi reached up to swat away the winning boundary, Bangladesh cricket also flew high as it not only completed a memorable whitewash against New Zealand, but also took them to a new level. In the glow of the floodlights of Fatullah, the mission was fully accomplished after yet another 'Banglawash' over New Zealand. But the word seemed to be just a reflection of the achievement of Mushfiqur Rahim's men, because the ease with which they chased down the 308-run target has ushered in a new era for Bangladesh cricket.

Yesterday's run-chase -- brought to the fans by Shamsur Rahman's outstanding knock of 96 and an ideal opening stand, sensible middle-order batting and finally Mr. Finisher Nasir Hossain's timely return among the runs -- not only gave the home team the rare feat of winning two consecutive home series with seven wins in a row against a higher-ranked side but also showed how confident, matured and fast-progressing they are in the 50-over format. The authoritative batting also cancelled out the brilliant hundred of Ross Taylor, who survived on 12 after Rubel Hossain failed to take a return catch, and made it clear that the 'Bangla ghost' will hunt the Black Caps for some time.

With the new fielding restrictions it is hard to know what score is defendable, but there were doubts during the innings break whether the whitewash would be possible after New Zealand put up a commanding total of 307 with the help of Taylor's unbeaten 107 and Colin Munro's scintillating 85. Former national skipper Habibul Bashar however

seemed to read the Tigers' minds as he asked 'Why not?'

There was also the record of Bangladesh only chasing 300-plus (313) once against lowly Zimbabwe in 2009 in Bulawayo. But doubts started to fade once Shamsur, in just his second ODI, and Ziaur Rahman -- the all-rounder who replaced the ailing Tamim Iqbal -- unleashed a fearsome counterattack to lay the perfect foundation from where Bangladesh never looked in danger, expect two small jitters in the middle.

It's a series where nobody could predict who would be the

I hadn't played well in the last two games so when I went up to the wicket, it was my aim to make my team win and be there till the end, and thank God I managed to do that. The win feels fantastic, at the same time I feel relieved.

Nasir Hossain



ultimate hero as the fans saw a new match-winner in every game, and it was Shamsur Rahman's turn to steal the show yesterday. The right-hander did exactly what was needed from a batsman to dominate the bowling attack on this kind of surface. By using power and sheer timing he hit lofted shots all over the park during his 107-ball 96 which saw seven four and four sixes. Zia's poor shot to end the 61-run partnership caused apprehension, but little Mominul Haque joined Shamsur to consolidate the position with a 65-run stand. The dismissals in quick succession of Mominul and captain Mushfiqur brought back the frustration on the faces of the thousands in the stands. But Naeem Islam and Shamsur ignited the capacity crowd again before the latter got a thick edge against Corey Anderson to wicketkeeper Ronchi to end a crucial 75-run partnership and hopes of a maiden hundred.

Still 104 runs behind the target at that stage, the home side was never under pressure from the run rate. After a brilliant knock in the first game, Naeem batted with purpose to keep his side in contention and his 74-ball 63 was an innings which paved the way for Nasir to confirm his tag of a good finisher with an unbeaten 38-ball 44. Naeem's unfortunate run out and vice-captain Mahmudullah Riyad's unlucky dismissal barely put the skids on the Tigers' charge.

Mushfiqur Rahim's decision to field first may have caused surprise and consternation when it was followed by some ordinary bowling, but the Tigers ultimately reserved the bigger surprise. When a team wins such a difficult encounter without two stalwarts such as Shakib and Tamim, one can only wonder at the recipe for success, but the Tigers backed by a deafening orchestra of support at Fatullah sent a clear message to the world that their roar must be heard.

Because the last whitewash took place three years ago, this one just happened today. So this one obviously feels better. But above all it feels really good to have beaten them seven times in a row. My personal performance was not really good, but at the end of the day everything feels good because of the win.

Abdur Razzak

For me this was a dream win really. Apart from Vettori, I believe that this side was a much better one than the one in 2010. Never in our dreams did we think that we would win this series so easily. Their presence was barely felt. I honestly believe that the way we won has taken us way ahead in one-day cricket.

Mashrafe Bin Mortaza

BD-NZ SCOREBOARD									
NEW ZEALAND					R	B	4s	6s	
Devchid c Razzak b Mahmudullah					46	38	8	0	
Latham c Mushfiqur b Rubel					43	73	0	2	
Elliott c Gazi b Razzak					3	5	0	0	
Taylor not out					107	93	9	3	
Munro c Mushfiqur b Mahmudullah					85	77	7	2	
Anderson c Ziaur b Gazi					1	4	0	0	
Ronchi not out					13	10	2	0	
Extras: (lb-3, w-6)					9				
Total: (For 5 wickets in 50 overs)					307				
Did not bat: N McCullum, Mills, Milne, McClenaghan									
Fall of wickets: 1-66, 2-82, 3-101, 4-231, 5-232									
Bangladesh					R	B	4s	6s	
Shamsur c Ronchi b Anderson					96	107	7	4	
Ziaur c Milne b McClenaghan					22	20	2	2	
Mominul c b Devchid					32	33	4	0	
Mushfiqur c Taylor b McCullum					2	4	0	0	
Naeem run out					63	74	5	0	
Nasir not out					44	38	5	1	
Mahmudullah c Ronchi b McClenaghan					16	13	1	0	
Gazi not out					11	10	2	0	
Extras: (lb-4, lb-3, w-9, nb-7)					23				
Total: (For 6 wickets in 49.2 overs)					309				
Did not bat: Mashrafe, Razzak, Rubel									
Fall of wickets: 1-61, 2-126, 3-129, 4-204, 5-254, 6-289									
Bowler					O	M	R	W	
Mills					8	1	55	0	
Milne					7	0	42	0	
McClenaghan					9.2	0	69	2	
Anderson					10	0	56	1	
N McCullum					8	0	44	1	
Devchid					7	0	36	1	
Result: Bangladesh won by 4 wickets and clinched the 3-match series 3-0.									
Player-of-the-match: Shamsur Rahman									
Player-of-the-series: Mushfiqur Rahim									
Toss: Bangladesh									
Umpires: Enamul Haque and REJ Martinez									

I am still not celebrating because there's still a game left to win. Celebrations can wait till the T20 game is won.

Shohag Gazi

'2010 set us up'

SPORTS REPORTER

It was hard not to feel sorry for New Zealand's stand-in skipper Kyle Mills when he took his seat at the post-match press conference. His side, for the second successive time, had suffered a whitewash at the hands of a rampant Bangladesh.

Even harder to take must have been the fact that he was the last wicket to fall -- stump uprooted by Rubel Hossain -- in 2010's 4-0 debacle and three years later in charge of the side that has gone down 3-0.

"It's obviously not great. Anytime the side loses it's extremely disappointing, not just for myself but all the other players and the management who came out here to win the series. There was an opportunity for us today to finish on a high leading into the T20 game. But there are a couple of days before the T20, and that will be our main focus now," said Mills.

Despite a series-long effort to banish memories of 2010, Mills admitted that it had a bearing. "I guess the scars from that series set us up for this series. We were quite wary of the Bangladesh side," he said.

It's not all doom and gloom, however, and Mills finished with a veiled warning. "We are actually a very good side in the one-day format. Slight hiccup here in subcontinental conditions, but let's not forget that the World Cup will be played in quite different conditions -- a lot faster and bouncier wickets which will suit our play compared to the Bangladesh side."

3-0 feels better: Mushfiqur

SPORTS REPORTER

Both vanquished New Zealand and victors Bangladesh did their best to play the volley of questions about the latter's 4-0 victory in 2010 with a dead bat till yesterday's completion of a second successive whitewash, but with it came the opening of a floodgate of relief from Bangladesh captain Mushfiqur Rahim.

Cricketers are a superstitious breed, which is perhaps why Mushfiqur kept silent about the possibility of a repeat of 2010 -- he was wary of jinxing a good thing. And the jinx almost took effect with New Zealand scoring 307 after being put in to bat, but Bangladesh proved capable of besting the Kiwis yet again.

"We were hearing 'Banglawash! Banglawash!' from the start so I was a bit concerned about it, but definitely, we hoped to win the series if we played to our potential. Whether

3-0 or not, it's not easy to lead the side, but they have matured and are gathering experience. The way (Shamsur Rahman) Shuvo played today, from next time if he chases 300 he will know what to do and help someone else," said Mushfiqur.

The admirable trend of finding faults even in victory continued, but the dominant sentiment yesterday was of relief that a special feat had been achieved. "We were not up to the mark because we didn't bat 50 overs in the last two ODIs. So from there, one of our goals was that at least the top 8 batsmen bat well in today's game. So at the interval I just said one thing, if our

TIGERS' HIGHEST CHASES				
313/6	v Zimbabwe	Bulawayo	Aug 16, 2009	
309/6	v New Zealand	Fatullah	Nov 3, 2013	
293/5	v India	Dhaka	Mar 16, 2012	
276/7	v West Indies	Roseau	Jul 28, 2009	
250/5	v Australia	Cardiff	Jun 18, 2005	

top eight batsmen play the 50 overs we can definitely win this game," Mushfiqur explained a plan well-executed.

Mushfiqur was full of praise for the volume of performers in the side, especially with the absence of Shakib AL Hasan. Naeem Islam made a comeback to fill the place vacated by Shakib and top-scored in the series with 163 runs, including two crucial half-centuries. "Definitely, the performers have increased. Nasir (Hossain) didn't score in the last two games, but we have been saying for the last two days that he is a big-match player. Even Naeem (Islam) Bhai -- he was not supposed to play if Shakib had been available. So I feel that everyone has matured a lot," said the diminutive skipper who was declared man of the series because of his batting, keeping and captaincy.

It is impossible not to think of

the 4-0 whitewash in 2010 as that started Bangladesh's rise as an ODI unit while this result -- against the same team -- confirmed it. Even stand-in Kiwi skipper Kyle Mills said that they carried those scars into this series. "Both achievements were different experiences. But personally, the 3-0 win feels better for me. For one, I am the captain now and that (2010) result you can achieve with a lot of hard work, but to hold on to that result is even more difficult. Our best performers were not there in this team, so I feel this series win is doubly important. It's really amazing and proof that Bangladesh cricket is improving," he said.

Hard work is his and the team's mantra, and the Tigers have recently acquired an insatiable appetite for improvement. "I hope we can continue like this. That is the biggest challenge -- it's difficult but if we have the mentality we can do it."



This is what you call a
Banglawash
Congratulations to Bangladesh Cricket Team

