

Kiwis find voice amid Tigers' chorus

BISHWAJIT ROY

Bangladesh ended their remarkable series against New Zealand with a 15-run defeat in the one-off T20 International at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

The shortest version of the game remains a mystery to the Tigers which helped the Kiwis finally win a match on a tour characterised by the home side's unprecedented dominance and consistency against a higher-ranked opponent on way to drawing the two-match Test series and whitewashing the visitors in the three-ODI series.

It would have been a fitting end had the Tigers signed off with a victory but they still maintained their flair till the last game in front of a capacity crowd, who showed no dismay towards their heroes for the defeat in an entertaining, high-scoring encounter.

New Zealand showed their prowess in this format over the hosts, riding on aggressive batting from Colin Munro and Anton Devcich to leave the city with a consolation victory. Bangladesh however did not lose the match badly. They conceded the highest total of 204 in this format because of a lack of intensity in their bowling in the Powerplay and then showed ultra-aggressiveness in the chase to lose three wickets inside the first two overs. The top batsmen failed to exploit the crucial Powerplay as they could not understand that 'every ball is not to be hit to the boundary' as all --

Shamsur Rahman, Ziaur Rahman and Mominul Haque -- perished after playing same flamboyant shots.

Captain Mushfiquir Rahim however led from the front to uphold their trend of bouncing back under pressure but his maiden T20I half-century was not good enough for his side to pull off another surprise. Despite the loss of early wickets Bangladesh came out swinging through the batting of Mushfiquir, Naeem Islam, Nasir Hossain, Mahmudullah Riyad and the required run-rate was never an issue till the 16th over, but ultimately the failure of one of their fast scorers to bat through saw them drop away near the end and finish with 189 for nine.

Earlier opener Devcich put the Tigers' bowling to the sword with innovative strokeplay during his 59-run knock and his 73-run opening partnership in 7.1 overs with Hamish Rutherford set the tone for the tourists. But Bangladesh's bowling, led by experienced Mashrafe Bin Mortaza, made the job easy as they lacked variation and seemingly could not understand that length bowling in this format was not good enough.

Devcich however must thank debutant Al-Amin -- coming into the side after Rubel Hossain was forced to pull out at the

last moment due to fever -- who dropped a chance to deprive Mashrafe of an early breakthrough in the last ball of the first over. Eventually it proved too costly for the home side as Munro then capitalised on the good start, playing an unbeaten knock of 73.

But the loss could not take away the gloss from the Tigers as they received the ODI series trophy from Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the evening.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is seen with the Bangladesh national cricket team members during the presentation ceremony of the Sahara Cup 2013 at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Jurgensen pleased

SPORTS REPORTER

As skipper Mushfiquir Rahim -- slightly grim-faced after having passed up the opportunity for a loss-free series by losing the lone T20I by 15 runs -- left the press conference, coach Shane Jurgensen smilingly took his place in front of the microphone to reflect on a series in which Bangladesh drew two Tests, won all three ODIs and lost the T20I against New Zealand. "Today it's a bit hard to say, but we have become so used to winning," came the reply when asked about his thoughts on the series as a whole. "It's been a fantastic series as a team. Even today we were missing four or five players -- Shakib [Al Hasan], Tamim [Iqbal], and Rubel [Hossain] was ruled out in the morning and even Shafiu [Islam]. We lost by only 15 runs and today too people stepped up, that's been the story of the series as a whole.

"The preparation for this series began in June, it's just been fantastic attitude from the guys and leadership from the seniors. I'm just very happy," Jurgensen said.

Jurgensen picked Mominul Haque, Mushfiquir and Shohag Gazi as special performers. In the final analysis however, he laid the credit for the success at the feet of the whole team and their camaraderie.

'Always slightly in front'

SPORTS REPORTER



Yesterday New Zealand achieved something they have failed to do in more than five years -- win an international match against Bangladesh in Bangladesh. By winning the tour-ending T20I they have ensured that they have something to show for a month-long tour, and their stand-in skipper Kyle Mills seemed a relieved man after the Kiwis pulled off a 15-run win over the Tigers, a result that was always on the cards after they had piled up 204 for five after winning the toss.

"I think we batted magnificently well. The opening partnership with [Anton] Devcich took the game by the scruff of the neck. Ross Taylor crafted another beautiful innings and Munro carried on the form from the last game," said Mills at the post-match press conference.

Although Bangladesh did reach 85 for four in just seven overs, Mills said that did not panic the tourists. "At the halfway mark I was pretty confident. We just had to bowl well and take the early wickets and the bowling group really stepped up today from what was an adequate performance in the last ODI. With us picking up wickets we were always slightly in front."

Along with Devcich's 59 and Colin Munro's 73, all-rounder Corey Anderson continued his good form by making the difference with a spell of two for 21 in four overs. "I think Bangladesh played our spinners really well today and Anderson really stood up which he has done every time he's had an opportunity with the bat or ball in this series. He is a great find for us and today I think he bowled exceptionally well.

"The Bangladesh side are playing pretty aggressive cricket under [Shane] Jurgensen. I think when you get into a situation like this -- a sell-out crowd, one-game series -- there is only one way Bangladesh were going to play. We were fully aware that they were going to come pretty hard at us, which they did. We were fortunate to pick up early wickets which nullified it," Mills said when asked whether he was surprised by Bangladesh's aggression even after losing three early wickets.

Sachin gets Rohit going

CNN-IBN, Kolkata

Rohit Sharma made his long-awaited debut in the five-day format of the game in the first cricket Test against West Indies here, getting his coveted cap from none other than Sachin Tendulkar who is playing in his farewell series.

Medium pacer Mohammed Shami also made his debut on his home ground at the iconic Eden Gardens and ironically he was presented with the cap by lanky pacer Ishant Sharma, who was left out of the playing eleven due to his indifferent form. Sharma, Umesh Yadav, Amit Mishra and Ajinkya Rahane have been left out of the playing eleven in the first Test against the West Indies.

Rohit got the nod ahead of Rahane after all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja was ruled out of the Test series due to a shoulder strain. Rohit's brilliant run of form in the recently-concluded seven-match ODI series against Australia won him the 278th Test cap for India.

Rohit was adjudged player of the series against the Aussies, amassing an astonishing 491 runs at an average of 122.75 which also included a superb 209, only the third double-century in ODI history.

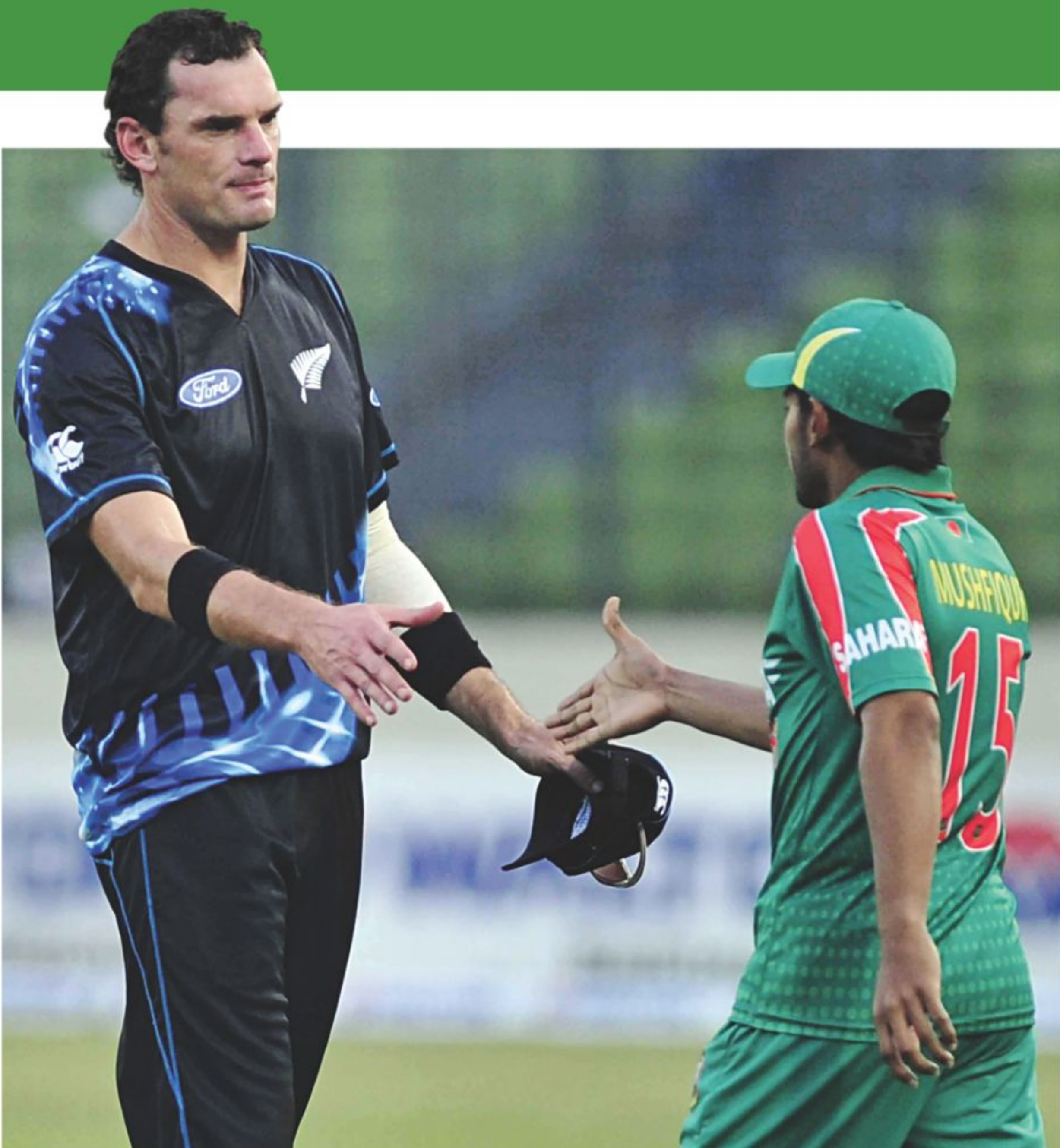


PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

ALL IN A DAY'S WORK: Bangladesh skipper Mushfiquir Rahim (R) shakes hands with his New Zealand counterpart Kyle Mills after the end of the T20 International at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

'Need to play more'

NAIMUL KARIM



Following Bangladesh's 15-run defeat to New Zealand at Mirpur yesterday, captain Mushfiquir Rahim lamented Bangladesh's lack of experience in the T20 format and that they were yet to have a proper understanding of the game.

"We have a lot of work to do. T20 is a different kind of game which we still haven't managed to understand, to be honest," said Mushfiquir at the post-match press conference at Mirpur yesterday.

"If we play such few games we can never improve. If you notice their batting, they did not go on an all-out attack. They were calculative and calm," added the captain.

Bangladesh played four T20Is this year, including yesterday's game and won just once against Zimbabwe. Yesterday's defeat meant that they have now won just one of their last eight games, a fact the captain was not at all pleased about.

"We play [T20] matches after four to five months and then people say that we fought hard, but what's the point? We lose. We may as well have lost this match by 100 runs. A loss is a loss," said Mushfiquir.

"We need to bring more maturity in our planning and power-hitting, something that we can only earn playing more matches. You can never expect us to win if we play after long gaps, that's difficult," he added.

New Zealand scored 70 for no loss in the first Powerplay. According to Mushfiquir, following the visitors' flying start, it was difficult to contain them.

"We tried to pull back from the 7th to 15th overs, but they did not give us that

opportunity, they batted well. Our death bowling or Powerplay bowling also did not go as expected, we should have kept them within 180 and then it could have been a different ball game," said Mushfiquir.

The hosts too had their share of runs in the first six overs. They scored 74 -- their highest in T20s so far --but lost four wickets, three of which fell in the first two overs. Mushfiquir was the key scorer in that Powerplay, scoring six boundaries. The 24-year-old was however disappointed with the loss of early wickets.

"The way we batted in the Powerplay, it's not possible to do that every day. We can't attack every ball. No team would do that after losing so many wickets. That's not my natural batting or Naeem [Islam] bhai's or any of our batsman's. I doubt if we can click if we play like this in the future," he said.

The Tigers scored 112 runs in the first 10 overs and seemed good for the chase. The scenario however changed following Mushfiquir's departure in the 11th over.

"In the last two overs if we had a set batsman then I think we could have chased 20 runs. Had I played more overs, probably the situation would have been better. But I didn't have any options," he said.

Despite losing the lone T20 match, the captain was positive with the way his side played in the series.

The newfound ability to battle pressure moments, according to him, was Bangladesh's biggest gain from the series.

"Whenever we were in a crisis, the right player performed. Personally when I go to bat now, I don't have to worry, because there are so many performers in the side," said Mushfiquir.

BD-NZ SCOREBOARD

NEW ZEALAND	R	B	4s	6s
Devcich c Shamsur b Razzak	59	31	10	1
Rutherford c Nasir b Gazi	17	17	1	1
Taylor c Naeem b Ziaur	28	25	3	0
Munro not out	73	39	3	5
Anderson b Al-Amin	18	6	1	2
Ronchi c & b Al-Amin	0	2	0	0
N McCullum not out	0	0	0	0
Extras: (lb-2, w-7)	9			
Total: (For 5 wkts in 20 overs) 204				
Did not bat: Latham, Mills, Southee, McClenaghan				
Fall of wickets: 1-73, 2-83, 3-176, 4-200, 5-200				
Bowler	O	M	R	W
Mashrafe	4	0	46	0
Gazi	3	0	30	1
Al-Amin	4	0	31	2
Nasir	1	0	16	0
Mahmudullah	4	0	34	0
Razzak	2	0	19	1
Ziaur	2	0	26	1
BANGLADESH	R	B	4s	6s
Shamsur c McClenaghan b				
Southee	4	2	1	0
Ziaur b Southee	6	2	0	1
Mominul c Mills b				
McClenaghan	9	6	0	1
Mushfiquir c Taylor b				
Anderson	50	29	7	1
Naeem c Southee b Mills	18	10	3	1
Nasir c & b McCullum	28	20	4	0
Mahmudullah c Taylor				
b Anderson	34	25	0	3
Gazi run out	24	15	1	1
Mashrafe not out	7	7	1	0
Razzak b Southee	0	1	0	0
Al-Amin not out	5	3	1	0
Extras: (lb-3, w-1)	4			
Total: (For 9 wkts in 20 overs) 189				
Fall of wickets: 1-4, 2-11, 3-19, 4-62, 5-116, 6-120, 7-177, 8-177, 9-183				
Bowler	O	M	R	W
Southee	4	0	38	3
McClenaghan	3	0	45	1
Mills	4	0	32	1
N McCullum	2	0	18	1
Devcich	3	0	32	0
Anderson	4	0	21	2
Result: New Zealand won by 15 runs.				
Player-of-the-match: Colin Munro.				

Shami's dream debut

Tendulkar keeps all waiting

AGENCIES, Kolkata



Pacer Mohammed Shami announced his arrival on the Test arena by scalping four wickets in a dream spell against the West Indies as a dominant India started Sachin Tendulkar's farewell series by taking early control of the first Test in Kolkata on Wednesday.

Shami returned impressive figures of 4-71 in 18 overs as India bowled out the visitors for a paltry 234 after they opted to bat at the Eden Gardens on the opening day.

At stumps, India were comfortably placed at 37 for no loss with the two openers, Shikhar Dhawan (21) and Murali Vijay (16), at the crease and trailing the West Indies by 197 runs.

West Indies skipper Darren Sammy's decision to bat may have prevented the crowd from watching Tendulkar bat on the first day itself, but the 40-year-old retiring legend did his bit with the bowl picking up a wicket in his first over, taking his Test wicket tally to 46.

While Tendulkar was undoubtedly the cynosure of all eyes, Shami grabbed the opportunity with both hands as he rocked the West Indies middle-order with a hostile spell that included quite a few reverse-swinging deliveries.

The 23-year-old Shami's wickets included Kieran Powell, top-scorer Marlon Samuels, Denesh Ramdin and Sheldon Cottrell.

Earlier, West Windies were placed comfortably at 107 for two at lunch, but Shami wreaked havoc in the second

session, extracting excellent reverse swings from the Eden pitch to trigger a collapse. The touring side lost eight wickets for 96 runs to be skittled out in 78 overs. Samuels scored 65 off 98 balls with the help of 11 fours and two sixes. Dhoni gave the last over before tea to Tendulkar, bringing the crowd on its feet. It turned out to be a master-stroke by the 'Captain Cool'.

After bowling three deliveries, the maestro unleashed a flipper and Shillingford had no answer.

SCOREBOARD				
WEST INDIES: First innings				
Gayle c Vijay b Kumar	18			
Powell c Kumar b Shami	28			
Bravo run out	23			
Samuels b Shami	65			
Chanderpaul b Ashwin	36			

Ramdin b Shami	4			
Sammy c Kumar b Ojha	16			
Shillingford lbw b Tendulkar	5			
Permaul c & b Ashwin	14			
Best not out	14			
Cottrell b Shami	0			
Extras: (b-4, lb-7)	11			
Total: (All out in 78 overs)	234			
Fall of wickets: 1-34, 2-47, 3-138, 4-138, 5-143, 6-172, 7-192, 8-211, 9-233				
Bowler	O	M	R	W
Kumar	14	6	33	1
Shami	17	2	71	4
Ashwin	21	9	52	2
Ojha	24	6	62	1
Tendulkar	2	1	5	1
INDIA: First innings				
Dhawan not out	21			
Vijay not out	16			
Total: (For no loss in 12 overs)	37			
To bat: Pujara, Tendulkar, Kohli, Sharma, Ashwin, Dhoni, Kumar, Shami, Ojha				
Bowler	O	M	R	W
Best	2	0	15	0
Cottrell	5	2	13	0