

Tigers left stranded

Taijul takes five-for

SPORTS REPORTER



Bangladesh were left struggling at 105 for 4 at Tea on the third day of the first Test at the Arnos Vale in St Vincent yesterday. West Indies, who had begun the day on 407 for 3, lost quick wickets – courtesy of a five-wicket haul from Taijul Islam – and declared their first innings at 484 for 7 an hour before lunch.

With barely an hour to go for the morning session to come to an end, all Bangladesh's openers needed to do was safely negotiate the new ball. Instead, they attempted adventurous drives which led to their own downfall.

Opener Tamim Iqbal was the first to go as his attempted front-foot drive off Kemar Roach ended up inducing an edge to second slip in the fourth over. Three overs later Imrul Kayes perished in an almost identical manner as he played a half-hearted shot to a delivery right outside the off-stump.

At 18 for 2, Bangladesh needed a partnership and that came in the form of Shamsur Rahman and Mominul Haque for the third wicket. The pair shared a nervous 62-run stand in an attempt to rebuild the innings. Shamsur in particular looked streaky as a number of his boundaries came off the edge of the bat. The opener was eventually caught at slips while attempting to drive a wide delivery outside off stump off Suleiman Benn.

Meanwhile, Mominul it seemed was all set to play a big innings as he scored his fourth Test fifty in the 37th over through a cover drive. His drives, though streaky, seemed well timed. However, right at the stroke of tea, the left-hander attempted an unnecessary glance down the leg side which caught the bottom edge of his bat. The diminutive left-hander reviewed the decision to no avail. Mushfiqur Rahim and Mahmudullah Riyad were set to face the music after tea.

Earlier Taijul became the sixth Bangladesh bowler to get a five-wicket haul on debut. He began by removing the dangerous Kraigg Brathwaite for 212. Not the best of sweepers, Brathwaite top-edged a delivery while attempting to play a paddle sweep. He then removed both Denesh Ramdin and Jerome Taylor while the batsmen were attempting to up the run-rate. Taijul, who bowled 47 overs, finished with figures of 5 for 135.

The bowler also could have had the golden wicket of Shivnarine Chanderpaul had Mushfiqur not made a mess of a stumping opportunity in the morning session. Chanderpaul has been stumped just once in his entire career and almost got out in that fashion for the second time as a flighted delivery from Taijul beat the 40-year-old. Chanderpaul eventually finished on 85 not out.



Teammates congratulate slow-left armer Taijul Islam at the Arnos Vale in St Vincent yesterday after the bowler became the sixth Bangladeshi to take a five-wicket haul on debut.

PHOTO: WICB

Niloy treble helps BD into Rd 2

SPORTS REPORTER



Forward Hasan Jubair Niloy slotted a hattrick as Bangladesh beat Hong Kong 3-1 in their last match of the first round of Hockey World League (HWL) at the Maulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium yesterday to move into the second round as champions.

Bangladesh, who took this tournament as part of their preparation for the upcoming Asian Games as well, did win both their matches but failed to impress with their performance against lowly Sri Lanka and Hong Kong. These performances indicate that a tough challenge lies ahead of them in the Asian Games pool where

they will play against South Korea, Malaysia and China.

"I am not happy with the way our boys played today (Sunday). Everyone played their own style instead of following the game plan. The players are also suffering from fatigue due to three months of training. However, I think they will be at their peak in terms of fitness during the Asian Games and you will find everything different," said Bangladesh coach Naveed Alam after the match.

Bangladesh, who needed just a draw to advance to the next round, toiled to break the opposition defence and took 27 minutes to open their account against Hong Kong, who were beaten 1-6 by Sri Lanka in their first match. Niloy opened the account with a reverse hit after receiving the ball from Pushkor Khisa Mimo.

Bangladesh looked a bit more organised after the break and snatched three penalty corners, one of which Niloy, availing a weak push, managed to hit fiercely at the back of the board.

Hong Kong brought some intensity to their game and pulled a goal back in the 51st minute from a penalty stroke, converted by Ka Ha Chan. However, Hong Kong failed to sustain the challenge and when Niloy snatched his first international hattrick in his 54th minute, the game was all but over.

"I am happy with my performance but we could not play according to plan. There was a problem upfront and the defending was also poor too but I am confident that we will play well in the Asian Games by rectifying the mistakes we made in the last two matches," said tournament's top scorer Niloy.

Boomers off to Korea

SPORTS REPORTER



Bangladesh national U-23 football team left here for South Korea last night to take part in the upcoming Asian Games with a target to perform well against higher ranking sides.

In an attempt to cope with the conditions, the booters have been sent seven days prior to the start of the football event, which gets underway from September 14 even though the opening ceremony of the Asian Games will be held on September 19.

"Our first target is to have a well organised team with a good game plan and good technical attitude against opponents. If the players can stick to these plans throughout the 90 minutes, I am sure we can collect some points there because the team knows how to play," said head coach Lodewijk de Kruif at an official press conference at the BFF House yesterday.

Bangladesh have never crossed the first round hurdle in the Asian Games and have only won two of the 19 matches they played. One of those two wins came against Nepal and the other against the Philippines.

"I am happy with five weeks of preparation but we are in a tough group which also includes Afghanistan, Uzbekistan and Hong Kong, all of whom higher ranked sides than Bangladesh. But we are taking it as a challenge; and I want the boys to be highly motivated for the country," said de Kruif.

Bangladesh team have had more than one month's preparation at the Bangladesh Krira Shikha Protisthan in Savar and have played six practice matches including two against Nepal U-23 team.

Captain Mamanul Islam feels lack of consistency is the main problem for the side. "The problem with the side is inconsistency which we want to overcome and to do something good for the nation. I have been trying to cope with the style that the coaches want to instil and I believe we will perform well in the Asian Games," said Mamanul.

Dramatic Eng win

AFP, Birmingham



England captain Eoin Morgan laid the platform for a thrilling three-run win over India in the lone Twenty20 international at Edgbaston on Sunday. Morgan top-scored with a dashing 71 in England's 180 for seven after he won the toss.

Nevertheless, India -- in the final match of their tour of England -- were cruising to victory while Virat Kohli (66) was at the crease.

But when he was out India lost their way and they needed 17 off the last over, bowled by Chris Woakes, to win.

But, importantly, India captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni, one of the world's most dynamic limited overs batsmen, was facing and he promptly launched the first ball of the over over square-leg for six.

The next ball saw India complete a risky two as Dhoni retained the strike.

Dhoni failed to score off the third ball but mishit the fourth off paceman Woakes for a boundary over long off.

India now needed five to win off two balls. Dhoni then edged Woakes to square leg but refused a single that would have put Ambati Rayudu on strike.

That left him needing a six off the last ball to win the match or four to send the game into a super over.

But no boundary came as England held on for victory.

Former Ireland left-hander Morgan had managed just 198 runs in his last 10 one-day international innings.

But the number five showed his class in a 31-ball knock which included three fours and seven sixes.

Alex Hales made 40 and all-rounder Ravi Bopara 21 not out off nine balls as England scored 67 in the last four overs.

SCORES IN BRIEF

ENGLAND: 180-7 (Morgan 71, Hales 40, Bopara 21; Sami 3-38)

INDIA: 177-5 (Kohli 66, Dhawan 33, Dhoni 27 not out)

Result: England won by 3 runs.

Player-of-the-match: Eoin Morgan

Shakib plays for juniors

SPORTS REPORTER

Ace all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan yesterday took part in his first competitive match -- an unofficial two-day practice match between Bangladesh Under-19 and Bangladesh A -- ever since he was suspended on disciplinary grounds in July.

The left-hander's suspension will be lifted on September 15. He is however, allowed to practise and use Bangladesh Cricket Board's facilities. Surprisingly though Shakib is playing for U-19 side in the match as opposed to the second-string national side.

"He has been training with the under 19 cricketers for the last few weeks. And that's why the decision was taken to include him with them in this game," explained the board's media manager Rabeed Imam.

Shakib's return however, was not a successful one as he was sent back to the pavilion for 11. He is yet to bowl.

12TH NATIONAL SUMMER ATHLETICS MEET

Shariful surprise on lacklustre day

SPORTS REPORTER

Shariful Islam of Bangladesh Army made the headlines on the opening day of the 12th National Summer Athletics meet at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday. Shariful, a soldier in the Bangladesh Army who is making his debut in a national meet, took 21.30 seconds, just 0.20 seconds short of the national record, to beat reigning champion and fastest sprinter of Bangladesh Mezbah Ahmed of Bangladesh Navy by 0.12 seconds. Abu Raihan Mustafa of Navy grabbed third place with a time of 21.90 seconds.

Shariful, who hails from Tangail and was with BJMC before joining Bangladesh Army in 2011, said he

was confident and was looking forward to winning the 100m sprint on Monday.

"It's not been long that I came into athletics. It started with a district athletics meet a few years ago, before I got into BJMC in 2009 and into Bangladesh Army in 2011," said the soldier. "I was confident of winning gold, especially after doing well in training. I'm confident I can win the 100m gold too."

Unlike the men's, the women's 200m sprint did not produce any surprises as last edition's champion Shirin Akter of Bangladesh Navy defended her title by clocking 25.50 seconds, 0.30 seconds faster than former champion Shamsun Nahar Chumki of Bangladesh Army and 1.00 second faster than Army's

Sumita Ghosh.

Shirin, who recently participated in the Commonwealth games in Glasgow, said she was frustrated with the Bangladesh Olympic Association's (BOA) decision to drop athletics from the Bangladesh contingent, but was nevertheless resolved to defend her title.

"The day the decision was made was the same day the results of my HSC exams came out. I got A in the exams, but that delight was more than marred when I heard about the decision," said Shirin.

However, there was little from most other participants in terms of performance to suggest the BOA's decision was entirely unjustified.

South Asian Games gold medalist Sumita Rani of Bangladesh Jail,

who was five-times defending champion in the women's 100m hurdles, took 16.22 seconds to finish second yesterday where her SA Games mark was 13.98 seconds. The new champion in this event, Jesmin Akter of Bangladesh Army, took 15.10 seconds to finish the race.

National record holder Sajib Hossain of Bangladesh Navy failed to clear more than 1.90 metre mark in men's high jump, a far cry from his record of 2.10 metres. Sajib came second to Mohammad Sohail of Bangladesh Army who cleared 1.95 metres.

Javelin record holder Rasheduzzaman did get a gold medal, but cleared only 61.54 metres, which is 2.20 metres less than his record mark.

Shock of the Open

First-timers to face off in final

AFP, New York

Kei Nishikori and Marin Cilic set up a shock US Open final Saturday as Novak Djokovic and Roger Federer, with 24 Grand Slams between them, were dumped out in one sensational afternoon.

Japan's Nishikori, the 10th seed, became the first Asian man to reach a Grand Slam final when he swept past seven-time major winner and world number one Djokovic 6-4, 1-6, 7-6 (7-4), 6-3 despite on-court temperatures of almost 40 degrees.

Nishikori, the first Japanese man since 1918 to reach the semifinals in New York, goes on to face Croatian 14th seed Cilic in Monday's championship match after he also reached a maiden Grand Slam final by beating five-time New York winner



KEI NISHIKORI

Federer 6-3, 6-4, 6-4.

It will be the first major final that has not featured one of the big three of Djokovic, Federer or Rafael Nadal since the Australian Open final in 2005 when Marat Safin defeated Leyton Hewitt.

The 27-year-old Djokovic was the 2011 champion in New York. He was playing in his eighth successive US Open semifinal and bidding for a sixth final, his 15th overall at the majors.



MARIN CILIC

In contrast, 24-year-old Nishikori's best effort had been a run to the quarterfinals of the 2012 Australian Open.

Cilic, who missed the 2013 US Open as he sat out a doping ban, overwhelmed 17-time Grand Slam champion Federer with 13 aces and 43 winners.

The second seeded Swiss, the champion between 2005 and 2008, was bidding at 33 to become the

oldest winner of a Grand Slam title in more than 40 years and vying to reach a seventh final in New York.

Instead, he was out-played by the 25-year-old Cilic, ranked 16th in the world, whose only prior appearance in a major semifinal was at the 2010 Australian Open.

Federer had come from two sets to love down and saved two match points in his quarterfinal win over Gael Monfils, but there would be no astounding escape this time.

"To be able to play like this, I never dreamed of," said Cilic. "I think today was just the best performance ever in my career."

He's the first Croatian to reach a Grand Slam final since Goran Ivanisevic, now Cilic's coach, won Wimbledon in 2001.

Federer said he wasn't affected by his five-set marathon against Monfils.

The next ball saw India complete a risky two as Dhoni retained the strike.

Dhoni failed to score off the third ball but mishit the fourth off paceman Woakes for a boundary over long off.

India now needed five to win off two balls. Dhoni then edged Woakes to square leg but refused a single that would have put Ambati Rayudu on strike.

That left him needing a six off the last ball to win the match or four to send the game into a super over.

But no boundary came as England held on for victory.

Former Ireland left-hander Morgan had managed just 198 runs in his last 10 one-day international innings.

But the number five showed his class in a 31-ball knock which included three fours and seven sixes.

Alex Hales made 40 and all-rounder Ravi Bopara 21 not out off nine balls as England scored 67 in the last four overs.

SCORES IN BRIEF

ENGLAND: 180-7 (Morgan 71, Hales 40, Bopara 21; Sami 3-38)

INDIA: 177-5 (Kohli 66, Dhawan 33, Dhoni 27 not out)

Result: England won by 3 runs.

Player-of-the-match: Eoin Morgan