

SPORT



LET THE CELEBRATIONS BEGIN: The Tigers embark on a celebratory lap after securing victory in the second Test against Zimbabwe in Khulna yesterday.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

'Always had faith in spinners'

BISHWAJIT ROY from Khulna

As soon as Billy Bowden raised his finger and indicated the end of Zimbabwe's innings, Bangladesh captain Mushfiqur Rahim erupted. Seconds later, he plucked the stumps and blindly swung one in the air which mildly scraped close-in fielder Shuvagata Hom, who luckily was wearing a helmet. Shuvagata for his part brushed aside Mushfiqur, who briefly stopped his celebrations to enquire on the player, and rejoined the fun.

It was Bangladesh's first series win in a traumatic year and anybody watching the hosts' celebrations on screen could have easily understood what it meant to them.

In contrast to their plans, the Tigers made a slow start yesterday morning. For a moment it seemed as though the Tigers would end up losing a good number of overs in their pursuit of reaching a 'safe score'. Eventually the visitors were set a target of 314 and Bangladesh's bowlers had 68 overs to play with.

"We wanted to reach a safe position since there was not much support from the pitch [for the bowlers]. It could have been good

It could have been good had we given them 75 overs. But I had the faith in Shakib [Al Hasan], Taijul [Islam] and Likhon [Jubair Hossain] because I knew that anything was possible if they bowled in the right area.

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bowled in the right area.

"I think the wickets we got before the lunch break helped us a lot to win this match," said Mushfiqur in the post-match press briefing yesterday, adding that the Tigers never thought that the match could end as a draw.

Despite the excitement Mushfiqur, as he usually does, calmed down midway through the press conference and resorted to speaking on his favourite subject: the 'processes' of the game.

"There are still some areas where we should improve ourselves. Next we have matches against big teams, so it would be

fantastic if we can finish 2014 on a winning note. We are happy with the 2-0 lead. If we can keep this process on then we can achieve our expected rankings.

"It's more difficult to maintain our rankings than just reaching the position. So rather than thinking too much on rankings, it's better to focus on our own improvement," reckoned Mushfiqur.

He further stated that he was especially happy with his spinners since the wicket did not support them as much. "They had to work hard in all the five days to earn their wickets," the captain concluded.

Happy? Not so yet!



"When the boys will win some matches in the World Cup, I will be really happy then," was the instant reaction from a smiling Bangladesh coach Chandika Hathurusingha after his side's 162-run victory over Zimbabwe in the second Test in Khulna yesterday.

Frank-ly Streak-ing



SPORTS REPORTER from Khulna

Prior to this series against Zimbabwe, Bangladesh's bowling coach Heath Streak had said that he felt like he was 'Frank Lampard playing against Chelsea', when asked how he felt playing against his country.

The Tigers' dressing room erupted with joy after they completed a series win against the southern-Africans here yesterday. And while Streak was no doubt a happy man, he kept a lid on his celebrations. He later told reporters that he believed that the visitors 'fought hard'.

"As a professional I am happy that my team won the match and the series. But I also feel sorry for the Zimbabwe team. It's not easy to handle the Bangladeshi spinners in their own den. But I still believe this team [Zimbabwe] fought hard," said Streak.

BD-ZIM SCOREBOARD

BANGLADESH: First innings 433 (Shakib 137, Tamim 109, Mahmudullah 56; Panyangara 2-49, Chatarra 2-61, Waller 2-65)

ZIMBABWE: First innings (Masakadza 158, Chakabva 101; Shakib 5-80, Taijul 3-96, Rubel 2-55)

BANGLADESH: Second innings (overnight 201-5)

Tamim c and b Panyangara	20
Shamsur c Taylor b Waller	23
Mominul c Chakabva b Waller	54
Mahmudullah c Masakadza b M'shangwe	71
Shakib lbw b Waller	6
Mushfiqur c Chakabva b Waller	0
Shuvagata c Masakadza b M'shangwe	50
Taijul c Panyangara b M'shangwe	3
Shahadat c Masakadza b M'shangwe	1
Rubel not out	8
Extras: (b-4, lb-4, w-3, nb-1)	12
Total: (For 9 wickets in 83.5 overs)	248
Fall of wickets: 1-28, 2-75, 3-131, 4-145, 5-145, 6-220, 7-222, 8-236, 9-248	

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Chigumbura	6	2	13	0
Panyangara	12	3	45	1
Chatarra	7	3	19	0
Waller	27	4	59	4
Raza	6	0	22	0
M'shangwe	25.5	2	82	4

ZIMBABWE: Second innings

Raza c Mominul b Shakib	9
Chari c and b Taijul	61
Masakadza c Mominul b Shakib	4
Taylor c Shuvagata b Shakib	0
Chakabva c Mahmudullah b Jubair	27
Ervine st Mushfiqur b Jubair	21
Chigumbura c Mahmudullah b Shakib	12
Waller b Taijul	4
Panyangara not out	8
M'shangwe c Mushfiqur b Shakib	0
Chatarra lbw b Taijul	1
Extras: (b-4)	4
Total: (All out in 51.1 overs)	151
Fall of wickets: 1-11, 2-13, 3-15, 4-85, 5-117, 6-137, 7-142, 8-142, 9-142	

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Taijul	15.1	3	44	3
Shakib	18	5	44	5
Shuvagata	4	2	9	0
Rubel	4	2	8	0
Jubair	10	0	42	2

Result: Bangladesh won by 162 runs and lead three-match series 2-0.

Player-of-the-match: Shakib Al Hasan.



Khulna was gripped by cricket festivity, which sounded throughout the city, with fans turning up in numbers at the Sheikh Abu Naser Stadium and living a raucous environment for the past five days.

PHOTO: STAR

When again?

SPORTS REPORTER from Khulna

The last five days in Khulna were mesmerising to say the least. Fans came in large numbers in the lone Test at the Sheikh Abu Naser Stadium (SANS) and, to some extent, the atmosphere represented that of a limited-overs series.

However, there were certain scenes across the city and around the stadium that looked like cricket had taken the back seat.

Almost the entire city was covered with banners, posters and archways depicting pictures of Sheikh Helal, the local organiser and a director of the BCB. Some gigantic pictures of BCB president Nazmul Hassan Papon were also put up. In the midst of it all, the pictures of the cricketers, who were the real stars of the show, were lost. The scenario, which represented a political procession rather than a sporting event, must have confused a number of spectators.

However apart from these issues the city of Khulna seemed to be up in arms, supporting the Tigers with packed stadium.

While watching the match from the stands was the number one priority for most of the dwellers last week, many also joined in the fun and frolic by merely roaming around the unusually bright and decorated streets of the city.

The question that remains is when the next international match will take place here. Most of the upcoming matches are lined up either for Dhaka or Chittagong.

"There are not many events that take place here. I have been living in this city for the last forty years and I must say cricket has added a new dimension to our lives. I watched all the international matches played at this venue but I don't know how long I will have to wait to see the next one," pondered Aminul Haque, who had come to the SANS with his wife and their 10-year-old son.

"We will be grateful to the BCB if they at least give us one ODI match from the series," said a hopeful Mojibul Ahmed, a student of a private university.

Siddikur on the charge

SPORTS REPORTER

Ace golfer Siddikur Rahman stayed in contention for a third Asian Tour title after racing into the joint third position of the Panasonic Open India with a five-under (67) in the second round yesterday.

The 29-year-old-golfer, back in action after being sidelined for five months with a back-strain, fired two eagles and two birdies against a single bogey at the Delhi Golf Club yesterday to take his overall tally to seven-under (137). That put him in jointly in third position, three shots behind leader Rahil Gangjee of India and two shots adrift of Australia's Wade Ormsby.

Meanwhile, Siddikur's compatriot Jamal Hossain Mollah, who had started the day in joint second position with a four-under (68) in the first round, slipped to joint 24th position after a horrid three-over (75) in the second round yesterday.

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