

The no-ball that wasn't

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To their utter disappointment and surprise though that delivery was deemed a no-ball due to height; and that's when Bangladesh imploded. Sharma shifted to top gear and hit Bangladesh out of the game. Such were the dire straits at that moment that at one point Mashrafe lost his concentration and placed an extra fielder outside the circle; for which he was no-balled.

All these factors just go on to show how crucial that decision was. For starters, that wasn't a no-ball. The ball was clearly dipping down upon impact. A few commentators in the box termed it questionable, but the more aggressive of them—the likes of Shane Warne and VVS Laxman, criticised Aleem Dar's decision.

How an umpire could straightaway lift his arm for a decision that marginal remains a crucial question. The general norm has always been to consult the third-umpire on such occasions. Why that query wasn't sent upstairs is a question that Bangladesh's fans will, in all likelihood, never get an answer to.

Bangladesh thought that they had done something that the teams in the big league do. They thought that they had managed to bring themselves back into the game for a second time after that catch. But after being denied in a ludicrous fashion, they went through the jitters; and could barely rise-up again when they went out to bat next.

So yes, it was Bangladesh's inexperience that led to their eventual downfall; but until the 40th over yesterday they played like any other big team in the circuit. Perhaps what was most painful for Bangladesh's fans; was to witness their team gradually fade away from the match after taking a hit for a mistake that wasn't theirs to repent.

BCB to appeal against...

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many decisions have gone against us. We will do whatever we can. The entire world has seen that," Papon told reporters yesterday.

ICC president AHM Mustafa Kamal also criticised the umpiring.

"Umpiring was very poor. The quality was below-par. To I am sure that the ICC will definitely review this," said Kamal.

There are a couple of decisions which irked Bangladesh's fans. One of them took place in the 40th over. Rohit Sharma pulled a full-toss to deep midwicket which was caught by Imrul Kayes. That delivery was deemed a no-ball. Replays however suggested that the ball was dipping down below the batsman's waist.

Parma declared bankrupt

AFP, Milan

Cash-strapped Serie A club Parma were declared bankrupt by a tribunal on Thursday.

Club official Osvaldo Riccobene told reporters following the tribunal: "The club's creditors called for bankruptcy, which was accepted by the prosecutor of the Republic."

In the absence of Parma chairman Giampietro Manenti, Riccobene and another official Enrico Siciliano represented the club at a scheduled hearing to decide its future.

Manenti and 21 other people were arrested Wednesday on money-laundering and other charges, police said.

Mashrafe...

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purposes of the ICC Code of Conduct. Mashrafe pleaded guilty to the offence and accepted the proposed sanction, so there was no need for a formal hearing.

As Bangladesh has no more matches left in the ICC Cricket World Cup 2015, Mashrafe will miss the next ODI, which is currently scheduled against Pakistan in April-May.

The charge was laid by on-field umpires Aleem Dar and Ian Gould, third umpire Steve Davis and fourth umpire Paul Reiffel.



Juventus star Carlos Tevez (R) celebrates one of his two goals against Borussia Dortmund during their Champions League round of 16 match in Dortmund on Wednesday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Tevez fires Juve, Barca edge City

AFP, Paris



A first-half goal by Ivan Rakitic was enough to see Barcelona end English interest in the Champions League on Wednesday as they beat Manchester City 1-0 in their last 16 second leg clash for a 3-1 aggregate win and a place in the quarterfinals.

Former Manchester City striker Carlos Tevez scored a double in the night's other game as Juventus pulled off an impressive 3-0 win away at 2013 finalists Borussia Dortmund to win 5-1 on aggregate.

For Tevez it represents quite a turnaround in fortunes in the competition, having gone six seasons without a Champions League goal, he has now scored six this term.

RESULTS

Borussia Dortmund (GER) 0 Juventus (ITA) 3 (Tevez 3, 79, Morata 70)

Juventus qualify 5-1 on aggregate

Barcelona (ESP) 1 (Rakitic 31) Manchester City (ENG) 0

Tevez, who despite showing excellent club form was never selected by former Argentina coach Alejandro Sabella including last year's World Cup finals, was modest about his contribution.

"The team played really well, I just do my job and the team deserved the win," said Tevez.

"We showed our experience and I think we're on the right path," added the 31-year-old.

Rakitic struck with a delightful effort after being found by Lionel Messi,

chesting it down and then lofting the ball over the outstanding Joe Hart.

"I think we put in a great effort out there," said Rakitic, after scoring his first goal in the competition.

"Perhaps we should have scored more but the public saw a great performance."

City had their chances to get back into the game, none more so than when Sergio Aguero was given the opportunity to reduce the overall deficit with a penalty.

However, he failed to take the chance and Barcelona held on comfortably only being denied a more convincing margin of victory by the impressive Hart.

Barcelona and Juventus join champions Real Madrid, last season's finalists Atletico Madrid, Porto, Germany's 2013 winners Bayern Munich and French duo PSC and Monaco in Friday's draw.

'It was a...

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and bowled well. The plan according to the captain was to stop the singles.

"They can hit threes, fours or sixes, but our plan was to stop the singles, and think our plan was pretty good. We were a bit unlucky that we couldn't get a wicket at that time it would have been much better for us," explained Mashrafe.

While that plan worked, Mashrafe however was disappointed with the overall mistakes in the game. "There were three mistakes. They could have been restricted to 270-280, secondly we couldn't make any partnerships and thirdly we kept losing wickets in every interval," he remarked.

Despite getting thumped out of the tournament, Mashrafe was proud of the way his team performed in the World Cup.

"It was brilliant tournament for us. Obviously the way we played today, it wasn't great, but most of the players in our side are from 2008, and we haven't played any cricket in Australia, so it was a really tough ask for us."

"The way they adjusted to the wickets and conditions, I feel very proud as the captain of this team, and hopefully our boys will take it in the next series and do well in the next few matches," concluded Mashrafe.

'Minnows' tag still attached?

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The fan may be fuming for some close calls that went against the Tigers at crucial junctures of the match that included the low full toss that got Rohit out in the deep on 90, only to be ruled out as a 'no ball' by square-leg umpire Aleem Dar; Mahmudullah's dismissal on the fine leg boundary; Mashrafe's confident leg-before appeal against Suresh Raina.

The first one was definitely not above waist-height as Aleem Dar concluded quickly without even consulting the third umpire. And had Ian Gould, the other umpire, ruled Raina out Mashrafe could have won that verdict. Mahmudullah's catch taken by Shikhar Dhawan right on the fine-leg boundary rope was inconclusive in TV replays.

These decisions sparked uproar in the social media but the harsh reality is that lower-ranked teams like Bangladesh have long been living as victims of errant umpiring decisions when they are up against the big names of world cricket.

However, it can hardly blot India's image as the most attractive and aggressive team in this World Cup. They are the deserving victors. They batted well, bowled brilliantly and fielded like hungry hounds.

Now it's time for the Tigers to return home with some pride, the pride of winning against England and pushing New Zealand to the limit in their own den. It's an inexperienced side that crumbled against the mighty Indians under pressure. But the good thing about this team is that it has the ability to overcome adversity. It's tough for the Tigers to produce four to five world-class batsmen soon, but one thing the Tigers can try and achieve is to match the Indian fielding and the sooner the better.

To India, good luck in the semi-final against either hosts Australia or Pakistan. India may prefer Pakistan over Australia (considering their experience in the 2003 World Cup final).

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