

Lightweight Star Face Cushioned Footbed

Apex™

twinkler Your Budding Star

f/apexfootwear www.apexfootwearltd.com



Mr Consistent

Mushfiqur Rahim must have heaved a sigh of relief after this World Cup; for his last one, in 2011, was a disaster. It wasn't a happy 2014 for the little batsman. As captain he had to take the brunt of the criticism that the Tigers faced last year.

A sad Mushfiqur with his head bowed down was a common scene witnessed at the post-match press conferences in 2014. Perhaps the worst part of it all was that he had to face all this despite being the best batsman in the side. In 2014, Mushfiqur was easily the highest run-getter for Bangladesh. As a result, his axing must have hurt.

However, he showed plenty of spirit and defiance. Ever since he handed over the captaincy to Mashrafe Bin Mortaza, at no point did he seem to let that move affect him. He was as fluent as ever during the World Cup, scoring 298 runs at an average of nearly 50.

A team player, Mushfiqur was involved in three crucial recovery partnerships that eventually took Bangladesh home. Against Afghanistan his century stand with Shakib Al Hasan for the fifth wicket took the game away from their opponents. Against England, he along with Mahmudullah took Bangladesh from a precarious 99 for 4 to 240 by the 45th over and changed the complexion of the game. His quick half-century against Scotland played a crucial role in chasing down that 300-plus target as well.

While Riyad set the tone at the top with his patient centuries and Rubel Hossain cleared the tail, Mushfiqur calmly went by his business and upheld the middle order.

The unlikely heroes

Mahmudullah Riyad

Just over a year ago there were calls for Riyad's exclusion from the side. That Riyad would go on to be the first Bangladeshi player to score a World Cup century was a prediction that not many would have made. However, his promotion in the batting order did wonders for him and the team. Of all the aspects of his batting in this World Cup, it was his aggression — a quality that you could rarely relate to the player — that surprised many. If it was pitched up, he confidently went for the drive. The shorter deliveries were pulled and hooked with precision. His fitness was another aspect that he focused on going into the World Cup. He lost plenty of weight and that clearly helped him spend more time at the crease.

Soumya Sarker

While sporting pundits in Bangladesh did expect a surprise in the selection, considering chief selector Faruque Ahmed's reputation, not many expected him to select Soumya Sarker. The mega event though, displayed exactly why the young-



World's Most Preferred Cement Brand from Switzerland

ster — who had played just one ODI prior to the World Cup — excited the team management. According to skipper Mashrafe Bin Mortaza, Soumya's aggressive technique at the top helped calm the nerves of the batting order. He is one of those rare textbook players that Bangladesh have produced and while he is still raw, there's no doubt that he can occupy a permanent place in a position — number three — that Bangladesh's batsmen have been struggling with for long.

Rubel Hossain

The pacer barely had anything going for him prior to the World Cup. From maintaining an embarrassing Test bowling average that hovered above 80 to getting involved with unwanted legal tussles, his life was pretty much in dire straits. The way Rubel turned around the table in this competition was quite surprising. His fierce yorkers and controlled line and length impressed many in the competition and suddenly he had become the bowler, not Shakib Al Hasan, that Bangladesh's opponents had to study. The difference with regards to Rubel in this competition was that he managed to direct that raw pace into the right areas.

Taskin Ahmed

19-year-old Taskin Ahmed could not have asked for a better first World Cup. With nine scalps he was the highest wicket-taker for Bangladesh; in addition to that his yorkers and bouncers tested some of the best batsmen in the world. The highlight of his inswinging yorker Rohit Sharma's

bowling was that which toppled stumps in the quarter final.



Captain courageous

You saw him shout in anger and wave in frustration, you witnessed him chest-thump the youngest and, in all likelihood, the strongest player to the ground and you also saw him drag his broken body on to the field to provide the Tigers the best possible start with the new ball; that's just how Mashrafe Bin Mortaza has been throughout the competition; he played with an undying spirit unmatched by any other player on the field.

Captaincy has been an issue for Bangladesh ever since 2014. The Tigers rarely managed to finish games that year and many reckoned that the losing tendency had gotten to Mushfiqur Rahim. After the series of defeats there was barely any aggressive intent from Mushfiqur. While the wicket-keeper batsman batted fluently, his bowling changes and fielding placements were severely criticised.

All that however, changed when Mashrafe took over the helm. Aggressive by nature, Mashrafe rarely took a step back. He always wanted to stay in control of the game; be it by making a bowling change or by adding a slip. It therefore wasn't a surprise to see him scratching his head and wave his hands in frustration against Sri Lanka and India. Those were games that were slipping out of his hands.

While such moves are commonly witnessed amidst the bigger teams in the contest, they were missing in Bangladesh's context for the last one year. As a result, these strategies in a



WORLD WILL SEE WHEN SILK ADORNS YOUR LIFE

BERGER

Rubel Hossain was the toast of the Tigers at the World Cup for his fierce bowling.

PHOTO: AFP

SEE PAGE 54 COL 2



Mushfiqur Rahim and Mashrafe Bin Mortaza may have played to their best, but it was the unheralded players -- Mahmudullah Riyad, Taskin Ahmed and Rubel Hossain -- who rose to the occasion and provided the Tigers with the impetus to make World Cup history.

PHOTOS: AGENCIES

FAN ZONE

f/clemoncleardrink

শেষের সর্বোত্তম অম্লরস Freshness

CLEMON



The West Indies and New Zealand fans enjoyed a great day of cricket at Wellington yesterday, with brilliant strokes being played all around - and one beyond -- the stadium.



Azka Khan: The Windies were playing at the same pace as the Kiwis. I wish they had more wickets in hand! Archit Kansal: Martin

Guptill's swashbuckling innings of 237 alone snatched the match from Windies. West Indies had no chance against him.