

SPORT

NEW ERA BEGINS HERE

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'T20s are different'

Lone BD-Pak clash today

BISHWAJIT ROY
The air is filled with the expectation of a win. It seems that nobody is ready to look back after Bangladesh's 3-0 triumph in the ODI series. But Bangladesh captain Mashrafe Bin Mortaza tried to paint a realistic picture when he talked about his team's chances against Pakistan in today's one-off T20 International in the pre-match press conference at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

Bangladesh tried and found answers to many questions in the 50-over version cricket, but T20s still remain a mystery for the Tigers and that was why Mashrafe didn't raise expectations by saying that they were favourites in today's game also, like they were in the ODI series.

The "Narail Express" however didn't completely rule out this team's chances of continuing their winning streak against Pakistan, as he believed that anything could happen if his team continued their good and positive approach on the field.

"We are very much positive. It will be altogether different from the ODI series. In every game the start is important, but in T20s the start is more important than any other format. I hope we will be able to achieve a good result if we make a good start," said Mashrafe.

The Bangladesh skipper pointed out their lack of T20s -- they played their last T20 match in the West Indies in August last year which was abandoned after 4.4 overs -- after their World Cup match against Australia in April 2014 and none of the players except Shakib Al Hasan has played in any domestic matches either. Apart from lack of matches, he also pointed to the lack of T20 specialists in the side, but he expressed his optimism over the young players and highly praised Sabbir Rahman for his big hitting ability.

"There is Sabbir, who can hit the ball hard and we have Tamim Iqbal. The little Mushfiqur Rahim can play big shots and also Shakib. Altogether we have five-six batsmen who can play big shots. However, in ODIs a batsman gets the time to settle in the middle, but that is not the case in T20s. I believe if our stroke-makers can play their natural game then we will have a good chance," said an optimistic Mashrafe.

"Since we are doing really well in the ODI format, we now need to seriously focus on how to improve in the shortest format of the game, keeping the next World Cup in mind. We lack depth in this format," he added.

Mashrafe said he agreed with his counterpart Shahid Afridi's statement that Pakistan are a better T20 side than an ODI side, but Mashrafe wanted to cash in on his team's positive state of mind.



Will Mashrafe Bin Mrotaza (L) and his men carry their one-day form against Shahid Afridi's vastly experienced Pakistan in the lone T20 International at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur today?



PHOTOS: STAR

WORLD WILL SEE WHEN SILK ADORNS YOUR LIFE

'Different ball game' Anamul lifts South Zone

SPORTS REPORTER

Pakistan captain Shahid Afridi expressed his optimism of turning the table on Bangladesh after a whitewash in the ODI series when his side take on the Tigers in the one-off T20 International at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur this evening.

The all-rounder was looking to bank on his side's experience and success as they have won 50 matches out of 85 and possess bowlers like Saeed Ajmal, Umar Gul and the captain himself in this format, but he was not ready to dismiss Bangladesh since they were in good form.

"You don't think about the past. If you look at it at the present, Bangladesh are doing very well with their combination. We have to go hard at them tomorrow," said the Pakistan skipper while he was reflecting on their 7-0 win record against Bangladesh in format of the game.

Though Bangladesh were yet to find

their feet in the newest format, Afridi was anticipating an exciting game against the Tigers. "Tomorrow will be a good game. I am not saying it will be one-sided. T20 is all about opportunities and if you get one, you can't miss it," he added.

However, Afridi reminded of Pakistan's strength in T20 cricket and said that what happened in the ODI series was past as he believed this to be better than the ODI side.

"It is a new format now. Sohail Tanvir, Umar Gul, Saeed Ajmal, Mohammad Hafeez and myself are all back. We have a very good combination in T20. I am very positive and confident that we will do well. I have to perform very well because my performance has always helped Pakistan. Nobody has to try too hard, if everyone performs well, it will help us win," warned the Pakistan skipper.

He was also not worried by Pakistan's poor showing in the ODI series. "This is not the era of Wasim Akram, Waqar Younis and Inzamamul Haq. In 6-8 months, the more cricket they will play, the better they will become."

SPORTS REPORTER

Opener Anamul Haque continued his run-spree and put Prime Bank South Zone in the driving seat against BCB North Zone in the Bangladesh Cricket League match at the end of the third day at Fatullah yesterday.

The right-hander, who scored 94 runs in the first innings on his return after a shoulder operation, remained not out on 96 and veteran Tushar Imran accompanied him with 48 as South finished the day's play at 213 for 2 to stretch their lead to 330 runs.

During his unbeaten 96, Anamul hit ten fours and two sixes. Resuming the day on 161 for 5, North Zone managed to add 74 runs to their overnight score before being dismissed for 235 runs. Naeem Islam could add only two runs to his overnight score of 42 and was top scorer for his side.

Pacer Al-Amin Hossain and left-arm spinner Abdur Razzak combined to shatter North Zone's first innings, with the bowlers picking up four wickets each.

SCORES IN BRIEF

SOUTH ZONE: 352 and 213-2 in 51 overs (Anamul 96 batting, Saykat 54, Tushar 48 batting; Delwar 1-35, Tajul 1-61)

NORTH ZONE: 235 all out in 97 overs (Junaid 30, Naeem 44, Ariful 42, Hamidul 39; Razzak 4-67, Al-Amin 4-67)

PCB chairman hails Tigers

AFP, Karachi

Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chairman Shaharyar Khan said he was "deeply disappointed" Thursday after the national team was whitewashed 3-0 by Bangladesh in the one-day series -- their worst-ever defeat against the lowly ranked side.

Fast-rising Bangladesh exposed a new look Pakistan team under a new captain Azhar Ali in all three matches played in Dhaka, winning by margins of 79 runs, seven and eight wickets.

Shaharyar praised Bangladesh, who shocked higher ranked England to qualify for the quarterfinals of the World Cup last month.

"We are playing a highly proficient Bangladesh team that has improved by leaps and bounds over the past few years. Yet such a display was unanticipated. Pakistan team will take time to gel together."

First Division Badminton

SPORTS REPORTER

Knit Concern, Kawasaki, Maha SC and Dhaka Gladiators won their respective matches of the Helvetia First Division Badminton League at the Shaheed Tajuddin Ahmed Indoor Stadium yesterday.

Knit Concern beat Dewan Textile 4-1 and Kawasaki edged past Gulshan SC 3-2 while Maha SC and Dhaka Gladiators recorded identical 5-0 wins over Surjo Tarun and Ahban Badminton Club respectively.



Mustafizur Rahman, a young left-arm pace bowler, is all set for a baptism by fire in Tigers' lone T20I against Pakistan today.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Many Tigers make hay

ICC ODI TEAM RANKINGS

(as on 22 April 2015)

Team	Rank	Rating Points
Australia	1	122
India	2	116
South Africa	3	112
Sri Lanka	4	108
New Zealand	5	107
England	6	101
West Indies	7	92
Pakistan	8	92 (-3)
Bangladesh	9	81 (+5)
Zimbabwe	10	50
Ireland	11	44
Afghanistan	12	38

Soumya Sarkar's maiden century helped Bangladesh secure a 3-0 one-day series sweep against Pakistan on Wednesday and pushed the 'Asian giants' down one place to the eight position in the International Cricket Council rankings.

Azhar Ali's side joins West Indies on 92 ratings points but are ranked below them when the ratings are calculated beyond the decimal point. In stark contrast, Bangladesh gained five points and now sits on 81 ratings points. This means only 11 ratings points separate seventh-ranked West Indies from ninth-ranked Bangladesh.

While Bangladesh as a team remain constant in the rankings, the players' dominance was reflected in the latest ICC ODI rankings. Mushfiqur, Soumya and Sunny achieved career-best rankings, while Tamim, Nasir, Shakib and Rubel have also made impressive gains.

Shakib Al Hasan Old: 10 New: 8
Mushfiqur Rahim Old: 30 New: 18
Tamim Iqbal Old: 48 New: 30
Arifat Sunny Old: 96 New: 53
Rubel Hossain Old: 62 New: 57
Soumya Sarkar Old: 129 New: 69

CSK's value Rs 5 lakh?

AGENCIES, New Delhi

The Board of Control for Cricket in India is reportedly up in arms after discovering that Narayanaswami Srinivasan, the board's former president and owner of the Chennai Super Kings, claimed the value of the IPL franchise is 5 lakh rupees.

According to the Indian Express, India Cements, the company of which Srinivasan is managing director and promoter, put the value of Chennai Super Kings at 5 lakh rupees in order to reduce the fee (five per cent of the value) they had to pay the board for converting the shareholding of CSK into a trust.

An independent evaluation of IPL brands by American Appraisal concluded that the CSK brand was worth roughly 400 crore rupees. It is not clear at this point how India Cements arrived at the Rs 5 lakh valuation.

U-19s take series 6-1

SPORTS REPORTER



Bangladesh U-19 cricketers won the final game to clinch the 7-match one-day series against their South Africa counterparts 6-1 at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in Chittagong yesterday. In the fiercely contested last game, Bangladesh overcame their opponents by one wicket with only 2 balls to spare as Mohammad Saifuddin led the team home.

Batting first, the tourists scored 232 for the loss of six wickets in their stipulated 50 overs, with Gallem hitting team's highest 53 runs. Bangladesh's last pair overhauled the target and reached 236 in 49.4 overs.

fours on his way to 61, while Shanto was equally devastating, hitting six fours and a six before Gallem took a catch off his own bowling to dismiss him for 55.

The hosts were in a good position at that time, but wickets began to fall again at short intervals and they were reduced to 207-8. Saifuddin however refused to give in and stayed at the wicket to ensure that his team would cross the finish line and claim a sixth victory over the reigning youth level World Champions.

The visitors could not acclimatise properly to the local conditions and this was apparent from the onset as they were left vulnerable time and again against Bangladesh's strong spin bowling. Saleh Ahmed, the slow-left armer took full advantage of that and became the highest wicket-taker with 13 scalps.

SCORES IN BRIEF

SOUTH AFRICA: 232-6 in 50 overs (Gallem 53, Foxcroft 49; Saifuddin 2-44)

BANGLADESH: 236-9 in 49.4 overs (Mehedi 61, Shanto 55; Mulder 2-33, Gallem 2-38)

Result: Bangladesh under-19s won by 1 wicket and clinch the series 6-1.

Sorry start by Siddikur

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh's ace golfer Siddikur Rahman made a poor start in the CIMB Niaga Indonesian Masters after playing two-over-par 74 in the first round at the Royale Jakarta Golf Club in Indonesia yesterday.

Siddikur, who is looking forward to getting back his form in the 750,000-dollar event, started on wrong foot after playing bogey in the first and second holes and continued it to 8th, 13th, 15th and 17th holes. Though the 30-year-old golfer played birdies in the 4th, 11th, 12th and 18th hole but could not recover from his early mistakes to finish at joint 55th after the first round.

The two-time Asian Tour winner now must improve his performance in the second round today to avoid the cut.

Unimaginable: Imran

THE DAWN, Karachi



Former captain and legendary all-rounder Imran Khan expressed shock over Pakistan's defeat to Bangladesh, terming the 3-0 whitewash 'unimaginable'.

Bangladesh thrashed a woeful Pakistan by eight wickets in Dhaka on Wednesday to sweep the one-day series and leave many fans in disbelief.

Imran blamed "nepotism" in the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) and a mismanaged domestic structure for Pakistan's slump, termed by many former players as the "lowest point" in the country's cricket history.

who have come through nepotism and without any merit. Sadly the people in our cricket board don't have any knowledge of cricket," Imran, who keeps an eye on cricket despite leading the Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf party, said in an interview on the sidelines of the by-elections in Karachi.

"I never thought Pakistan would lose to Bangladesh 3-0 and drop to number eight in the ODI rankings."

Imran revealed that even the great Vivian Richards of the West Indies had identified Pakistan as the "most talented" cricketing nation but a poor system meant the team never realised its true potential.

"Based on my 21-year experience of playing cricket I know that no country in the world has cricketing talent as good as Pakistan."