

SPORT

The Export Leader



HITS



TAMIM IQBAL
Runs: 277
Batting Avg: 69.25*
*Tamim's highest ever batting average in a Test series.



IMRUL KAYES
Runs: 249*
Batting Avg: 62.25
*Highest runs in a series for Imrul



MOMINUL HAQUE
Runs: 182*
Batting Avg: 45.50
*A consistent Mominul scored his eleventh consecutive fifty



MOHAMMAD SHAHID
Wickets: 5
Bowling Avg: 30.80

FLOPS



MUSHFIQUR RAHIM
Runs: 44
Batting Avg: 11*
*Mushfiqur's lowest series average since 2010



SHAKIB AL HASAN
Wickets: 2
Bowling Avg: 162.50*
*Shakib's worst bowling average in a series



MAHMUDULLAH
Runs: 119
Bowling Avg: 29.75

Shakib joining KKR today

SPORTS REPORTER

Ace all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan will be available to play for the Kolkata Knight Riders in their last two group stage matches of the Indian Premier League. According to Bangladesh Cricket Board's chief executive officer he obtained the no-objection certificate yesterday.

Shakib is leaving for India at 1.20 pm today. On the eve of his departure, the star was upbeat about his team's prospects.

"We won the IPL twice and we are again in a good position, so I am hoping for the best."

He was speaking to a group of reporters during the soft launch of his restaurant Shakib's Dine on Banani road no. 11 last evening. "Hopefully the Knight Riders will do well in this IPL too."

KKR will face Mumbai Indians on May 14 and Rajasthan Royals on May 16, both in Mumbai. Shakib will also be available for KKR if the team manages to qualify to the knock-out stages. As per the current scenario, KKR do have a good chance of making it to the next round.

Prior to the series against Pakistan, Shakib had played two games in the IPL. The final of the IPL will take place on May 24 and Bangladesh's camp for the upcoming India series is scheduled to begin next month. As a result, there are no chances of any clash in schedule.

India will arrive in Dhaka on June 7 to play a Test and three ODIs. The lone Test match will take place in Fatullah while the three ODIs are scheduled for the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur.

Dissecting the TEST ANOMALIES

NAIMUL KARIM

If the first Test gave Bangladesh the belief to dream big, the second taught them a lesson for being overconfident. While the performances in the limited overs format can bring countless accolades for the Tigers, the recently concluded Test series is proof that Bangladesh still have a long way to go in the longer version.

The fact remains that the Tigers were on the backfoot throughout both the Tests. They were bundled out for a below-par score in the first innings of the first Test and had it not been for the unlikely of turnarounds, courtesy of a record stand between Tamim Iqbal and Imrul Kayes, there wouldn't have been much of a difference between the results of the first and the second Test.

What made the 312-run opening stand out especially was Bangladesh's poor record for the opening stand. Selectors have used at least seven pairs of openers in recent times and the challenge to find the right pair had become

quite menacing.

However, records don't tumble frequently, that's the only reason why they are hailed. While Tamim and Imrul's dashing partnership managed to hide Bangladesh's bowling blues in the first Test, there was no hiding for the bowlers in the second.

In hindsight, this was perhaps the most ineffective bowling attack that Bangladesh had ever fielded in their 15-year Test cricket history.

In the last three years, the highest wicket-takers for Bangladesh have been Shakib Al Hasan (46), Shohag Gazi (38), Taijul Islam (35), Robiul Islam (21) and Rubel Hossain (15). The worrisome fact for the team management is that these bowlers are either out of form or favour.

Shakib took just three wickets in his last three matches and posted his worst ever bowling average (162) in the recently concluded Test series. Despite being amongst the wickets in domestic cricket, Gazi has been out of favour ever since he was reported for his action by the ICC after the West Indies tour last year.

According to selectors, Robiul hasn't

MOST RUNS						
Player	Mat	Inns	Runs	HS	Ave	100 50
Azhar Ali	2	3	334	226	111.33	1 1
Tamim Iqbal	2	4	277	206	69.25	1 0
Imrul Kayes	2	4	249	150	62.25	1 1
Mohammad Hafeez	2	3	232	224	77.33	1 0
Younis Khan	2	3	220	148	73.33	1 0

MOST WICKETS						
Player	Mat	Inns	Overs	Wkts	BBI	BBM Ave
Yasir Shah	2	4	94.3	10	4/73	7/131 34.00
Taijul Islam	2	3	107.4	10	6/163	6/163 39.80
Wahab Riaz	2	4	72.0	7	3/55	4/109 34.14
Mohammad Hafeez	2	4	45.0	6	2/47	4/129 24.16
Mohammad Shahid	2	3	60.0	5	2/23	4/95 30.80

been as impressive lately as he was in the past while Taijul and Rubel have been inconsistent. The young leg-spinner Jubair Hossain, who had played an important role in the Zimbabwe series, has apparently lost out quite a bit on his bowling accuracy ever since.

This is a huge problem; and the scenario has, in a way, compelled the team management to field eight batsmen in the last two Tests. The height of desper-

ation was visible when Mushfiqur Rahim, while defending the strategy, reckoned that Soumya Sarkar could play the role of the third seamer.

And the problem doesn't just end there. That the team management believed that bowling first would be the ideal decision despite the heavily biased balance of the team, made things worse.

Yes, Pakistan were on the back-foot going into the series, but to try to intimidate them with just three specialist bowlers in the side was asking a bit too much.

These are certain issues that the leader of the pack, Mushfiqur, who averaged just 11 with the bat in this series, should think about before the lone Test against India in Fatullah next month.

They may employ a similar tactic and get away with it, for Fatullah is known to be as flat as Khulna. However, the defensive strategy has never worked in Mirpur and with South Africa and Australia due later this year, the team management will need to find a solution as soon as possible.

Mohammad Shahid's medium pace

has perhaps been the only positive in the bowling department. He ran in with confidence and bowled quite smartly for a debutant.

While Tamim and Imrul will definitely mark this Test series in their diaries, it was a good show from Mominul Haque as well, who became only the fifth batsman to score 50s in 11 consecutive Tests.

While there is plenty of room for improvement in the longer version, the limited overs format saw the Tigers post a nearly flawless performance. The ODI team seems to be balanced from every aspect and its' all-round abilities of the players that should be credited in this regard.

Sabbir Rahman and Nasir Hossain, for instance, may not have made a mark with the bat in the series, but their fielding and bowling, have saved the team plenty of runs.

With a near-perfect performance in the ODIs, the Tigers would feel that the India series could not have come any sooner.

PCB chief detained in airport

AGENCIES, Kolkata

In what could have turned into a diplomatic embarrassment for India, Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chairman Shahryar Khan was detained for 5-6 hours by immigration authorities at Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose International Airport as he arrived from Dhaka on Saturday evening. Officers said Pakistanis flying into India were required to land in Delhi.

Shahryar, who was to meet BCCI chief Jagmohan Dalmiya on Sunday on resumption of the Indo-Pak cricket series, was later allowed to enter the city as a "special case" after intervention by the Union home ministry, reports said, citing sources.

Edgar explains his resignation

AFP, Wellington

Bruce Edgar said Sunday that lack of support and having to watch the World Cup final sitting among Australia players' wives and girlfriends, which he described as an "awkward situation to be in", were factors in him stepping down as a New Zealand cricket selector.

Edgar, credited with being one of the brains behind the Black Caps' revival over the past year, resigned last week claiming he received little support from New Zealand officials.

During his 20 months as a selector, Edgar formed a close partnership with coach Mike Hesson and captain Brendon McCullum as New Zealand went undefeated in six Test series, won five and drew two of nine one-day international series and reached their first World Cup final.

But Edgar told Radio Sport on Sunday he received minimal support from New Zealand Cricket throughout his tenure and the breaking point came when he was asked to take a pay cut and a reduced role.

Due draws in Round 3

SPORTS REPORTER



As expected, both matches of the third round of the Bangladesh Cricket League were drawn at the end of the fourth day yesterday. The matches, played in Chittagong and Fatullah, witnessed batsmen score plenty of runs and resulted in high-scoring affairs.

East Zone's Alok Kapali scored his second double-century of the year, while North Zone's Junaid Siddique went close to achieving a similar stat, but fell seven runs short of 200. South Zone witnessed three centuries in an innings -- Shahrar Nafees, Shohag Gazi and Mosaddek Hossain -- and saw their team pile up a total of 541.

At Fatullah, South Zone finished their innings 128 runs ahead of Central's first innings total. Skipper Abdur Razzak then bowled brilliantly to take three wickets midway through the innings. However,

Rakibul Hasan, who played a 120-ball 17 and Mosharraf Hossain, who scored 8 off 74 deliveries, ensured that there were no further hiccups and led Central Zone into the stalemate.

In the other game at Chittagong, East Zone finished the day on a 106 for 4 as the game ended in a tame draw.

The national players are expected to join the competition in the next round. Following the series against Pakistan, the players will take on India in a lone Test in Fatullah next month. They will be able to taking part in the BCL in a bid to get ready for that series.

SCORES IN BRIEF

EAST ZONE: 473 and 106 for 4 (Shadman 48; Sanjamul 3-39) and **NORTH ZONE:** 384
Result: Match drawn.
CENTRAL ZONE: 413 and 69 for 4 (Mehrab 20; Razzak 3-20, Mustafizur 1-14) and **SOUTH ZONE:** 541 all out in 133.4 overs
Result: Match drawn.

INA NUTSHELL

Dhoni's house in crosshairs

AGENCIES, Ranchi

If law takes its course, India cricket captain Mahindra Singh Dhoni's dream home in Ranchi will be demolished or else he will have to depend on the largesse of the Jharkhand government to prevent it.



It is alleged that Dhoni has built his new house not only on the six cents of land allotted to him by the state government but also on some land illegally acquired by him. The major portion of the house is built on the controversial property which was illegally grabbed by Dhoni.

The Jharkhand Housing Board the other day had served notice to Dhoni alleging that the cricketer had added nearly 4780 square feet of unused land (nearly seven cents) to his own property. The notice has asked the cricketer to give his reply within 15 days and it has been made clear that any delay in reply would lead to the attachment of the property. The reply should be submitted before May 21.

Sanga in UK immigration mess

AGENCIES, London

He may have been travelling to the United Kingdom for over 15 years, but legendary cricketer Kumar Sangakkara experienced the ugly side of immigration for the first time this Friday. The incident -- details of which were not revealed by Sangakkara -- had clearly left the cricketer perturbed.

"Back in London last night. Had a horrendous experience with a rude, patronising and extremely discourteous UK immigration officer," Sangakkara tweeted. Fortunately for the cricketer, the other members of the immigration staff were more polite. "Luckily the rest of the UK immigration officers were lovely. Coming to the UK for 15 years and first time I have encountered this," Sangakkara tweeted.

Murray stuns Nadal

AFP, Madrid

Andy Murray claimed his first Masters series title on clay with a stunning display to beat home favourite Rafael Nadal 6-3, 6-2 at the Madrid Open on Sunday.

Victory was also Murray's first ever on clay over Nadal in seven attempts and stretched the Scot's perfect start on the surface this season to 9-0 after winning his first ever clay court tournament earlier this week in Munich.

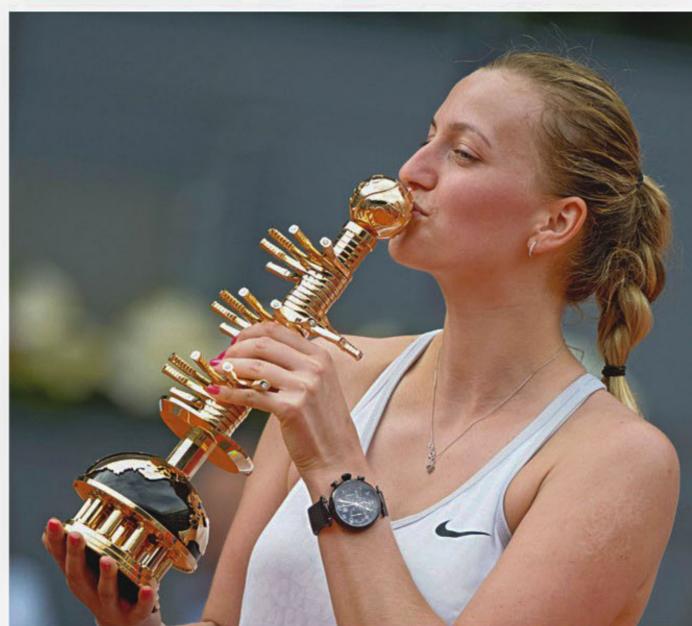
Defeat will see nine-time French Open champion Nadal slip to seventh in the world rankings, the first time he has been outside the top five in 10 years.

Nadal was searching for his third straight title in the Spanish capital, but his first of the European clay court swing after defeats to Novak Djokovic in the Monte Carlo Masters semi-final and a shock exit to Fabio Fognini at the Barcelona Open last month.

However, he was forced onto the backfoot by a confident Murray from the off as the two-time Grand Slam champion won 12 of the first 14 points in racing into a 3-0 lead.

Nadal had two break back opportunities in the seventh game and one more as Murray served for the set at 5-3, but he couldn't convert.

A similar pattern followed in the second set as a combination of some brilliant deep hitting by Murray and errors from Nadal to seal victory in just under 90 minutes on court.



Czech tennis star Petra Kvitova kisses the winner's trophy after beating Russian Svetlana Kuznetsova in the Madrid Open final on Saturday.

PHOTO: AFP

Kvitova lifts Madrid title

AFP, Madrid

Wimbledon champion Petra Kvitova romped to the Madrid Open title on Saturday with a crushing 6-1, 6-2 victory over Svetlana Kuznetsova.

The Czech ended Serena Williams's 27-match winning streak in the semifinals and was far too good for Kuznetsova, who looked heavy-legged after spending more than 11 hours on court to reach the final.

"I am very happy, I am really glad that I could win here for the second time in Madrid," said Kvitova.

"It is unbelievable for me to finish the week like this. I know that Svetlana wasn't feeling very well, so I wish her good luck."

The world number four only recently returned to action after a six week break.