



TIME TO CONSOLIDATE



'Had to fight for Mustafiz'

SPORTS REPORTER



Bangladesh pace bowling coach Heath Streak has earned plenty of acclaim in the last one week. The four pacers in the side are all confident and it has been the fast bowlers who have caused major problems for the Indian batting in the series so far. One bowler in particular that impressed him the most was Mustafizur Rahman.

"We fought hard to get him [Mustafizur] into the T20 squad against Pakistan and he showed what he is capable of. Since then it has been good to have Mustafiz, Taskin [Ahmed] and Rubel [Hossain] who we know can perform," said Streak at the team hotel yesterday.

While Mustafizur did enchant the country with his record breaking performance, Streak emphasised caution regarding the youngster.

"He is still very young. We have to be careful. He has taken 11 wickets but we can't expect him to take five wickets every time. He has shown his potential. If we look after him and support him, he will be a big match-winner for us.

"When Mashrafe started, he was looked after throughout his career. We have to make sure to have the system to support not just the young players, but the old players as well. Everyone has a role to play," said Streak.

"We are starting to see Taskin and Rubel show a lot more experience and putting that into practice. In the first two games their spells were under-rated. Rubel's wicket yesterday was at an important time for us. Taskin got [Shikhar] Dhawan and [Virat] Kohli in the first game, it was fantastic for us," he added.



HEATH STREAK

Mustafiz, a baby-faced killer

BISHWAJIT ROY

A wonder boy! A surprise! The feeling is yet to sink in. The selectors spotted his talent early and did not hesitate to bring him in the senior fold. The team management then trusted his abilities. What happened next is now a fairytale. Captain Mashrafe Bin Mortaza said that what 19-year-old Mustafizur Rahman had done against India was beyond his imagination. Chief selector Faruque Ahmed said: "He [Mustafizur] surprised us all."

The baby-faced Mustafizur is now the most lovable cricketing hero in the country. People's interest in him seems to have no limits.

Everybody now knows that how shy the charming left-arm pacer is when it comes to saying something in public. But still, already a lot has been revealed about his background. But fans want to know more and more about the recipe that made him such a crafty bowler.

"He may be shy when it comes to talking in the public but he is a cricket

"Generally he is simple but his cricket sense is unbelievable. I can still remember the way he bamboozled New Zealand in the Under-19 World Cup with his cutter and yorker."

smart," a simple but very interesting observation came from Mustafizur's long-time roommate Nihaduzzaman, a left-arm spinner who is now in the High Performance unit.

What is cricket smart? Nihaduzzaman went on: "From many instances I want to give you one example which will make you understand this. It was an Under-19 Asia Cup match against Afghanistan in Dubai in December 2013. We had a very small total on the board. There was grass in the pitch and the team needed some economy bowling from its main pacer Mustafizur. He has great strength in slower and yorker deliveries but on that

pitch he only swung the ball and finished with 2 for 19 in 9.4 overs. He himself kept those stock balls in reserve, nobody told him."

"Generally he is simple but his cricket sense is unbelievable. I can still remember the way he bamboozled New Zealand in the Under-19 World Cup with his cutter and yorker. There was nothing for me to say him anything as a captain," added Mustafizur's under-19 skipper Mehedi Hasan Miraz. "I first encountered him in Khulna in 2011 when he was quick but an erratic under-16 divisional pace bowler. I found him a different bowler in the under-19 team after his stint with the pacer hunt programme. The world only has seen his cutters, but you don't know that he can bowl seven yorkers out of ten deliveries," continued Miraz.

Nihaduzzaman however found another great quality in his character which is his honesty. "He is very straightforward. He is very clear about what he can do and he cannot. He doesn't like to hide anything. As a roommate since 2012 I can say you that honesty is the biggest strength in his character."

Again he gave examples in support of his claim. "During a fielding session in the under-19 camp our fielding coach had been trying him to do the sliding and suddenly he received an injury during the practice and when he came back after four days' rest he clearly said that he was unable to slide and did not want to risk his knee. Another instance was in England where he felt a pain in his leg after two deliveries and immediately without hiding the fact he said that it would not be possible for him to continue the tour. He went back home and

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finally a bad type of injury was diagnosed."

Miraz and Nihaduzzaman spoke of another quality in his character by saying that the word fear didn't exist in his dictionary. And that might be the reason why a newcomer like him coming in to bowl against one of the world's strongest batting line-up showed no signs of nerve.

Now the expectation is that he will serve the country for long. He needs to improve his muscle as well as increase the pace to become a lethal pace bowler in world cricket, but most importantly he needs to cope up with the sudden name and fame.

Faruque has the faith in the young man. "He is a very level-headed guy, so I believe he will be our long-term asset but we need to nurse him properly."

Finally one can be hopeful by the words from Nihaduzzaman. "This [Monday] morning he rang me and said, 'dost [friend], kemon achis [how are you]'. I congratulated him on his performance. But he was not ready for these accolades. He said, 'Forget this performance, pray for me so that I can have another good performance in the next game.'"

Aamer pleased

PTI, Karachi

Gearing up for a comeback to international cricket in three months time, Pakistan's banned left-arm pacer Mohammad Aamer said he felt happy to learn that new Bangladesh pacer Mustafizur Rahman idolises him.

A left-arm like Aamer, Mustafizur ripped through strong Indian batting line-up in the first two-match of three-ODI series, taking a total of 11 wickets.

Mustafizur, whose brilliant performance helped Bangladesh post first ever series victory over India, said: "Mohammad Aamer is my idol. I just follow the bowling of Aamer. His spot-fixing allegations don't bother me."

Reacting to Mustafizur's comments, Aamer said he felt honoured to learn that someone wanted to be a bowler like him.

"I felt so good to hear what Mustafizur had to say and I must say he is set for a great career because he is not an easy bowler to reckon with. He has all the weapons and he appears to have good cricketing sense," Aamer, who is currently playing in a top Ramazan T20 tournament in Faisalabad, said.

India stop Zim tour

TIMES OF INDIA

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has decided to cancel India's tour to Zimbabwe citing fatigue, according to various reports. It is also being reported that the tour could have been called off due to the tussle with the host broadcasters, Ten Sports.

India are to play three ODIs and two T20Is against the African nation from July 10th onwards, but the Indian board has decided to call off the series.

Recently, reports had emerged that the tour may be postponed, or worse cancelled, due to issues with Ten Sports. Following confusion over the status of the tour, Zimbabwe Cricket (ZC) had issued a clarification through a media release on Sunday.

High of the Tiger

Indian media laud Tigers, bemoan Team India

SPORTS REPORTER

As the Bangladesh newspapers yesterday eulogized the Tigers for their first-ever series victory over India, with banner headlines and blow-up pictures on the front pages, the news media of the neighbouring country was working out what went wrong for the 'mighty' Indian team while giving due credit to the Tigers.

The opening sports page of Indian Express ran a match report titled: Now playing: High of the Tiger, with a flavour of how much anticipated and eagerly awaited the victory was to the Bangladesh fans. The story started like this: It was more than three hours to go before the start of the second one-day International between Bangladesh and India, but there was already a festive atmosphere at the Sher-e-Bangla stadium. People had turned up not only from Dhaka but from neighbouring districts and far flung areas as well. Braving heat, hunger and thirst -- it was the third day of Ramadan and the longest day of the summer -- they had gathered here to witness the team make history.

This leading Indian newspaper also ran Mahendra Singh Dhoni's dismissive replies at the post-match press conference regarding his captaincy and selection of the team while another article questioned the decision to drop Ajinkya Rahane in favour of Ambati Rayudu. 'Magical Mustafizur wrecks India again' headlined Times of India. Surprises and

shocks were dished out in equal measure on Sunday at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium where Bangladesh recorded a historic ODI series win over India. On a day when Indian cricket sunk to a new low and Bangladesh cricket came of age, Mashrafe Mortaza's youthful brigade hammered out a six-wicket win in the second ODI to eke out an unbeatable 2-0 lead in the three-match series, the story commenced.

'Bangladesh outdid India, plain and simple' exclaimed another story of the same newspaper. This was not an upset. Those days are gone. Bangladesh are no more pushovers, with this team being their most settled ever, analysed the story.

'Mustafizur has India's number again' was the headline of a match analysis in The Hindu, which paid high praise for the young left-arm, saying: With the precision of a computer-operated missile, he (Mustafizur Rahman) used his deadly 'cutter' to perfection.

'The heat is on Captain Cool' cried another story of the same newspaper. No doubt, India's one-day captain MS Dhoni is going through one of the toughest tests of his cricketing career. His long walk back to the pavilion after being bamboozled by 19-year-old Bangladesh pacer Mustafizur Rahman spoke a lot about Dhoni's state of mind. A teenager had treated his high-profile side with disdain twice in succession and left a deep impact on Dhoni. He never looked the same 'Captain Cool' every Indian fan took pride in, opined the story.

We deplore Sudhir incident

SPORTS REPORTER



The news of Sudhir Gautam, one of the most visible Indian cricket fans on television, being attacked by a mob outside the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium after the second ODI, spread like wildfire yesterday.

Speaking to an Indian television channel yesterday morning, Sudhir said that he was mobbed outside the stadium as soon as the second ODI got over.

"As soon as I left the stadium, people mobbed me and started snatching my flag. Two policemen who were outside the stadium came to my rescue and escorted me to an auto-rickshaw. But the mob hurled stones on the vehicle," said Sudhir, while speaking to an Indian television channel.

Member of BCB's security team, Mohammad Ali, who was present at the stadium throughout the day, however, said that he had heard of the matter but his security personal employed inside the stadium had not witnessed any such incident.

"I am in charge of handling any such issue that takes place within the boundary of the stadium and I therefore can't really tell as to what



happened outside the stadium," Ali said.

Officials from the Mirpur police station told The Daily Star that they hadn't received any such complaints. "Since the issue has been brought up, we will put up more cautionary measures in the third and final ODI," said an official from the Mirpur police station.

According to a BCB official who had dug into the issue, a crowd-chanting 'mauka, mauka'-- did gather when Sudhir was leaving the stadium. But he didn't report any instances of physical assault or the hurling of stones.

A photojournalist, who had managed to take a few snaps of the incident, had a similar story to

narrate. The journalist though did add that after Sudhir was escorted into a CNG-driven auto, the vehicle was chased for a few seconds. A clear-cut picture of the incident was yet to be deciphered yesterday.

However, all things kept aside, if what Sudhir alleged is true then the series of events that took place were extremely unfortunate and should be condemned. The incident does not represent the values that the majority of Bangladesh's cricket fans stand for.

Bangladesh's fans are deemed to be one of the most enthusiastic in the world. In fact, Dhaka is one of the few venues in the world that has hosted some of the most exciting India-Pakistan encounters, with fans from both sides flocking into the stadiums and enjoying the game together.

Except for a minor stone-pelting issue during the World Cup in 2011, Bangladesh's cricketing scenario has never witnessed issues such as these.

With the series having already found a place in history, one would hope that such deplorable incidents, that will only tarnish the image of Bangladesh as a sporting host, should be dealt with iron hands.