



The world's best ODI batsman, South Africa's AB de Villiers, warmed up for his side's series against Bangladesh with a 25-run knock for South Africans against BCB XI at Fatullah yesterday.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Frenzy at Fatullah

SPORTS REPORTER

Three children were seriously injured, while ten others were hurt, at the Khan Saheb Osman Ali Stadium in Fatullah, as spectators rushed in to watch the practice match between the BCB XI and South Africans yesterday.

The Bangladesh Cricket Board's free entry policy attracted thousands of fans for the practice match and almost all the gates of the stadium were crowded.

According to the venue manager, the injuries occurred while the spectators were running in through the gates. A couple of them fell on the ground, while others were hurt while attempting to climb the barricades within the stadium.

Spectators ahead of the match broke some of the barricades down.

"There wasn't any problem with the security. There were around 250 officials for this match. It was just the sudden rush of spectators since there were no tickets. As they were all excited and running in to the stands, some of them got hurt," said venue manager Babul Miah.

Flawless victory for SA

SPORTS REPORTER

For a practice match, it was quite impressive how quickly the Khan Saheb Osman Ali Stadium in Fatullah filled up ahead of the clash between the BCB XI and South Africans yesterday.

Nearly three quarters of the stadium were full by the time Imrul Kayes had won the toss and opted to bat. The free entry policy did cause some tension at the start, with the incoming crowd breaking a few barricades within the stadium.

However, if those present at the stadium were hoping for a repeat of the spectacular result that a BCB side had managed in a practice match against Pakistan in April at the same venue -- a one wicket win -- then they were in for a wild shock.

A struggling BCB XI, which included two players from Bangladesh's T20I squad for the South Africa series, were brushed aside by the South Africans' young bowling attack, being bundled out for just 99 runs in 18 overs.

In reply, the visitors romped to a flawless ten-wicket win with eight overs to spare and in a way indicated to the hosts that this series could well be Bangladesh's most difficult of the year.

The visitors' dominance was evident from the fact that their openers Quinton de Kock and AB de Villiers were asked to retire in the seventh over, after putting on 64 runs. The pair smacked ten boundaries.

JP Duminy and David Miller, who came in next, ambled through to the target and barely broke a sweat.

The game ended in style as Miller hammered Razzak straight down the

ground for a huge six.

Earlier, the hosts were under pressure from the word go as pacer Kyle Abbott removed both Anamul Haque and Rony Talukdar in the third over. The batsmen were beaten by pace as the bowler managed to go past both their defences.

Captain Imrul was the only Bangladeshi batsman who looked a bit threatening. He hit three fours in his 24-ball 29 and was the only player who looked capable of going against South Africans' attack. However, once he perished in the eleventh over, the middle order collapsed.

He was dismissed courtesy of a brilliant catch. Imrul had launched David Wiese towards long-on. The fielder, running back, managed to catch the ball on the edge of the boundary, but was in danger of falling on the boundary rope. That's when he threw the ball up in the air for the deep mid-wicket fielder, who had by then run in to support the fielder at long on.

Skipper Faf du Plessis used nine bowlers in the match and it was a move that shed light on some of the newer players the visitors have in store.

Leg-spinner Eddie Leie, who flummoxed Mosaddek Hossain with a googly, was one of them. 30-year-old pacer David Wiese, who featured against Australia last year, was the pick of the bowlers with figures of 3 for 13 in three overs.

SCORES IN BRIEF

BCB XI: 99 all out in 18 overs (Imrul 29; Wiese 3-13, Abbott 2-2)

SOUTH AFRICANS: 101 for no loss in 12 overs (de Kock 35 retired, de Villiers 25 retired)

Result: South Africans won by ten wickets.

Karunaratne, Yasir light up final Test

'I don't believe in history'

Chandika Hathurusingha has been spending a wonderful time as the head coach of the Tigers, with his charges achieving two major ODI series victories at home against two South-Asian superpowers -- Pakistan and India. Under his tutelage the Tigers have been playing a good brand of cricket since the World Cup. Now the Sri Lankan stands before another challenge as formidable South Africa are in the country to play a full series. The Bangladeshi coach yesterday talked to the media for the first time since his side's magnificent 2-1 series victory against India. The following is an extract from the press conference at Mirpur.

Question (Q): Are the T20s versus SA part of preparations for 2016 World Twenty20?

Chandika Hathurusingha (CH): It has a lot to do with the World Cup in mind. We are thinking about our combination and game plan, what's going to be effective for us. This will be our focus for this series.

(Q): Are you excited by the last two series wins?

(CH): I think it is an exciting time for Bangladesh. I mean it is always good to win, but the way we are playing and winning is more exciting.

(Q): The youngsters are performing well. Do you take it upon yourself to keep them in check?

(CH): I haven't seen anything distracting coming in the camp. They are keeping their feet on the ground. They need to enjoy their successes. Some of the guys have done things that people have never done before so these are unprecedented successes. They have the right to enjoy what they are doing and be confident about it.

(Q): What are Mushfiqur Rahim's chances of donning the gloves in the upcoming series?

(CH): As soon as Mushfiqur is confident enough to keep, he will give us lot of options for our team combinations. Whenever he is confident about his finger, we are looking forward to giving him the opportunity to keep. He has started to keep in last few training sessions. We also have Litton (Das) in the squad. It is completely up to Mushfiq's finger. It is looking good, the physio is happy. It is healing quickly.

(Q): How do you feel about taking on South Africa?

(CH): South Africa has been a really, really good side for a long period of time in all formats of cricket. They have been a consistent side for several years. I think they are favourites. I haven't said this before. They are a very strong team.

(Q): Are you concerned about South Africa's pace?

(CH): We can't control how quickly they are going to bowl, isn't it? We are

preparing like we prepared for the other series'. It was our challenge to get used to the conditions in the World Cup where there were quick pitches. Training hasn't changed much, as it is working for us.

(Q): Bangladesh's pacers performed well against India. Should we expect you to follow the same strategy, or will the focus be more on spin?

(CH): Lately we have been balanced in spin and pace. Traditionally Bangladesh is known to have lot of good spinners. It is not different now. We don't have a lot of fast bowlers, but the ones we have can bring a different quality to the team. Some are tall,

not a part of history. We are part of present and what we do now. I can't do much about what players read or write. I can only tell the players what we can do now and what our strengths are. I constantly tell them how good they are and what they can do.

(Q): How do you plan to stop a batsman like AB de Villiers?

(CH): For AB, the plan is to bowl and pray that he gets out. He is arguably one of the best players in the world.

You can't plan much. We have to execute our best ball and control his damage. He is a human as well.

(Q): Across the 3 formats, where do you think you have the best chance to stop South Africa?

(CH): They have been a very strong side in all formats for a long time. I don't see that we have an advantage in any version. We can't pinpoint anything. We are confident with the way we play ODI cricket at this stage. We are really doing well. I still think that we will give them a good run. We are a very strong side.

(Q): Is there any new surprise in store?

(CH): (Smiles) Do I have to find a new surprise every series? Again, we probably play to our strengths in this series. Until I find someone in Khulna or somewhere else, we will stick to our strengths.

(Q): What are your plans for the Tests?

(CH): We probably have a lot more freedom because we are playing the Tests after the One Day Internationals and we are heading into another Test series, against Australia, as well. Depending on the available players, we will have a formula going forward.

(Q): How do you view the return of Shohag Gazi?

(CH): He has been bowling with his new action for so many months now. The selectors have seen him bowling in matches so we are banking on his new action being as good as the previous one. He is going to give us another attacking option.

some have variation, some can swing the ball. This is our advantage; we can go either way.

South Africa have good quick bowlers, a good batting side and lately they play spin well too. They are a very competent side. We can't find any major weakness in their armoury so we have to play consistent cricket and make good decisions in the middle.

(Q): Bangladesh has a poor record against South Africa. How do you look at the past records?

(CH): If I believed in history, I wouldn't be here today. I don't believe in history. It is there to change. It is how we go about doing it that is key. We are

some have variation, some can swing the ball. This is our advantage; we can go either way.

South Africa have good quick bowlers, a good batting side and lately they play spin well too. They are a very competent side. We can't find any major weakness in their armoury so we have to play consistent cricket and make good decisions in the middle.

(Q): Bangladesh has a poor record against South Africa. How do you look at the past records?

(CH): If I believed in history, I wouldn't be here today. I don't believe in history. It is there to change. It is how we go about doing it that is key. We are

some have variation, some can swing the ball. This is our advantage; we can go either way.

South Africa have good quick bowlers, a good batting side and lately they play spin well too. They are a very competent side. We can't find any major weakness in their armoury so we have to play consistent cricket and make good decisions in the middle.

(Q): Bangladesh has a poor record against South Africa. How do you look at the past records?

(CH): If I believed in history, I wouldn't be here today. I don't believe in history. It is there to change. It is how we go about doing it that is key. We are

some have variation, some can swing the ball. This is our advantage; we can go either way.

South Africa have good quick bowlers, a good batting side and lately they play spin well too. They are a very competent side. We can't find any major weakness in their armoury so we have to play consistent cricket and make good decisions in the middle.

(Q): Bangladesh has a poor record against South Africa. How do you look at the past records?

(CH): If I believed in history, I wouldn't be here today. I don't believe in history. It is there to change. It is how we go about doing it that is key. We are

some have variation, some can swing the ball. This is our advantage; we can go either way.

South Africa have good quick bowlers, a good batting side and lately they play spin well too. They are a very competent side. We can't find any major weakness in their armoury so we have to play consistent cricket and make good decisions in the middle.

(Q): Bangladesh has a poor record against South Africa. How do you look at the past records?

(CH): If I believed in history, I wouldn't be here today. I don't believe in history. It is there to change. It is how we go about doing it that is key. We are

some have variation, some can swing the ball. This is our advantage; we can go either way.

South Africa have good quick bowlers, a good batting side and lately they play spin well too. They are a very competent side. We can't find any major weakness in their armoury so we have to play consistent cricket and make good decisions in the middle.

(Q): Bangladesh has a poor record against South Africa. How do you look at the past records?

(CH): If I believed in history, I wouldn't be here today. I don't believe in history. It is there to change. It is how we go about doing it that is key. We are

some have variation, some can swing the ball. This is our advantage; we can go either way.

South Africa have good quick bowlers, a good batting side and lately they play spin well too. They are a very competent side. We can't find any major weakness in their armoury so we have to play consistent cricket and make good decisions in the middle.

(Q): Bangladesh has a poor record against South Africa. How do you look at the past records?

(CH): If I believed in history, I wouldn't be here today. I don't believe in history. It is there to change. It is how we go about doing it that is key. We are

some have variation, some can swing the ball. This is our advantage; we can go either way.

South Africa have good quick bowlers, a good batting side and lately they play spin well too. They are a very competent side. We can't find any major weakness in their armoury so we have to play consistent cricket and make good decisions in the middle.

(Q): Bangladesh has a poor record against South Africa. How do you look at the past records?

(CH): If I believed in history, I wouldn't be here today. I don't believe in history. It is there to change. It is how we go about doing it that is key. We are

some have variation, some can swing the ball. This is our advantage; we can go either way.

South Africa have good quick bowlers, a good batting side and lately they play spin well too. They are a very competent side. We can't find any major weakness in their armoury so we have to play consistent cricket and make good decisions in the middle.

(Q): Bangladesh has a poor record against South Africa. How do you look at the past records?

(CH): If I believed in history, I wouldn't be here today. I don't believe in history. It is there to change. It is how we go about doing it that is key. We are

some have variation, some can swing the ball. This is our advantage; we can go either way.

South Africa have good quick bowlers, a good batting side and lately they play spin well too. They are a very competent side. We can't find any major weakness in their armoury so we have to play consistent cricket and make good decisions in the middle.

(Q): Bangladesh has a poor record against South Africa. How do you look at the past records?

(CH): If I believed in history, I wouldn't be here today. I don't believe in history. It is there to change. It is how we go about doing it that is key. We are

some have variation, some can swing the ball. This is our advantage; we can go either way.

South Africa have good quick bowlers, a good batting side and lately they play spin well too. They are a very competent side. We can't find any major weakness in their armoury so we have to play consistent cricket and make good decisions in the middle.

(Q): Bangladesh has a poor record against South Africa. How do you look at the past records?

(CH): If I believed in history, I wouldn't be here today. I don't believe in history. It is there to change. It is how we go about doing it that is key. We are

some have variation, some can swing the ball. This is our advantage; we can go either way.

South Africa have good quick bowlers, a good batting side and lately they play spin well too. They are a very competent side. We can't find any major weakness in their armoury so we have to play consistent cricket and make good decisions in the middle.

(Q): Bangladesh has a poor record against South Africa. How do you look at the past records?

(CH): If I believed in history, I wouldn't be here today. I don't believe in history. It is there to change. It is how we go about doing it that is key. We are

some have variation, some can swing the ball. This is our advantage; we can go either way.

South Africa have good quick bowlers, a good batting side and lately they play spin well too. They are a very competent side. We can't find any major weakness in their armoury so we have to play consistent cricket and make good decisions in the middle.

(Q): Bangladesh has a poor record against South Africa. How do you look at the past records?

(CH): If I believed in history, I wouldn't be here today