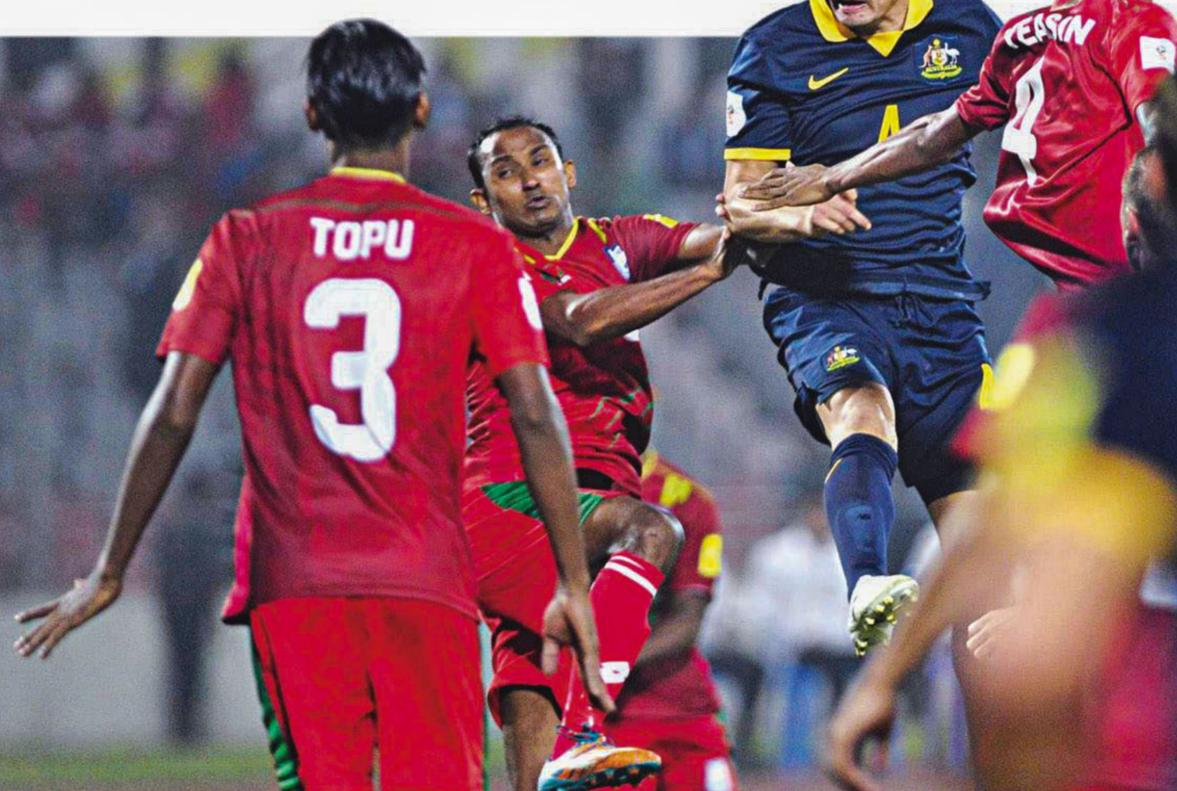


# SPORT



An airborne Tim Cahill (C) is under pressure from two Bangladesh defenders during yesterday's World Cup qualifier at the Bangabandhu National Stadium. The Socceroos striker struck thrice in a comfortable 4-0 win. PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

## Cahill stands apart

SPORTS REPORTER



Ten years ago on November 16, Tim Cahill and his Socceroos teammates made a bit of history on their journey towards the big stage of football. The class of '05 had ended a long and painful wait of 32 years for the World Cup after a two-legged qualifying play-off against Uruguay ended in a penalty shoot-out win for the men in green and gold in Sydney. The journeyman striker, who was playing for Everton at that time, played a key role as the Socceroos ensured their second World Cup berth.

Ten years on, and after having scored in Socceroos' next three World Cups, Cahill shows no sign of easing off as the 35-year-old's hatrick powered the Aussies to a 4-0 win against hosts Bangladesh last night. And his experience in playing in different countries and experiencing different cultures -- the Shanghai Shenhua marksman has played top-level club football in three different continents -- has probably lent him the humility that is amiss with a lot of world class footballers.

Having finished his job professionally and clinically on the pitch, the journeyman striker took a lap of honour around the turf of the Bangabandhu National

Stadium, applauding the support and respect of the fans.

The veteran of now 45 internal goals swapped his shirt with Bangladesh left-back Nasirul Islam before congratulating him for the brave performance from the hosts. "He instantly agreed to my request of swapping shirts and told me to smile as he felt we should be proud of our performance," Nasirul later told this reporter.

While Cahill did not attend the post-match press conference with the Socceroos in a hurry to leave for the airport straight from the ground, Australia coach Ange Postecoglou heaped praise on his star striker.

"He [Cahill] has always been a good player and he doesn't stop," Postecoglou said. "He wants to get going and wants to score goals. So I was pleased for his hatrick tonight [Tuesday]."

Having received world-class security and hospitality here, the Australia coach was perhaps even a bit apologetic for his federation's die-hard efforts to move the game from Dhaka and for having cut short the trip.

"From our perspective, we've always wanted to come to Bangladesh. The Bangladeshi people have been very friendly and the government helped us and the hotel has been fantastic. But the circumstances were different so we could not stay longer. But hopefully next time we can stay longer because we enjoyed the experience," added the Socceroos coach.

## Socceroos too good for hosts

ATIQUA ANAM



They came, they won, and they left with three valuable points -- that is probably the most suitable way to sum up Australia's short trip and even shorter work of hosts Bangladesh. The four-time World Cuppers and reigning Asian champions, who had their first look-in at the match venue only one-and-a-half hours before kick-off, rolled like a juggernaut in a comfortable 4-0 win.

The 20,000-something crowd at the Bangabandhu National Stadium, with a few Socceroos' fans dotted here and there in yellow patches, watched in awe as Tim Cahill, Australia's most prolific striker, bagged a first-half hatrick before skipper Mile Jedinak added a fourth shortly before the break. The crowd also witnessed a brilliant first-half cameo by Aaron Mooy, the Melbourne City forward, who teed up the first three goals for Cahill before his free-kick eventually led to the fourth.

However, regardless of the final scoreline, there was a lot to take home for the booters, who worked their socks off and, at times fought shoulder-to-shoulder against a side sitting echelons

above them. There was also some redemption for Bangladesh coach Fabio Lopez, who had been subject to heavy criticism since his side's 5-0 humbling in Tajikistan last week, as he kept the margin of defeat to less than what his predecessor had managed against the same opposition away from home two-and-a-half months ago.

The game started in a solemn mood as a minute's silence was observed before kick-off in memory of all those who perished in the terrorist attack in Paris last week. The mood got even

**BANGLADESH 0 - 4 AUSTRALIA**  
Cahill 6, 32, 37; Jedinak 43

more sombre as the Socceroos went for the jugular right from the off.

The early passages of play resembled more a game of rugby than football, as the Aussie forwards tried to bulldoze past a scrum Bangladesh defence, whose five-man backline was aided by four midfielders in and around the danger zone. Adam Federici, the Aussie goalie, loitered around the centre-circle as if one half of the pitch was enough to constitute a football match. And when Cahill got the breakthrough in the sixth minute, heading in a curling free-kick from Mooy, it felt like the Socceroos would leave Dhaka with a cricket score.

But the early nerves soon settled for the hosts and they even found a footing with a few one-on-one wins, helping the Red and Green faithful find the top of their voice. Mamunul Islam and Co launched their first serious attack at the quarter-hour mark when Monaem Khan Raju released Nabib Newaz Jibon, but the young striker, having darted towards the box, tried to find support rather than having a go at goal.

However Cahill, a veteran of 88 matches, soon took the game out of the hosts' reach with two quick strikes as he completed his second international hatrick and took his international tally to 45. The 35-year-old Shanghai Shenhua forward scored the second in the 32nd minute with a jaw-dropping juggling effort over the top of goalkeeper Shahidul Alam Sohel, before completing the treble five minutes later with a flick on Mooy's square-pass.

The shell-shocked hosts were dealt a further blow five minutes later, with Jedinak nodding in Mooy's free-kick, which was directed towards the Aussie skipper by Bailey Wright.

Socceroos coach, Ange Postecoglou, made two substitutions at the break and one during the second half, but his charges failed to generate the same pace and pressing as Lopez's charges managed to keep the visitors at bay in the second half and leave the pitch to an ovation from the crowd.

## Lopez happy

ANISUR RAHMAN

Bangladesh coach Fabio Lopez congratulated his players for a brave performance against the Socceroos and also thanked the home crowd for turning up in great numbers yesterday.

"I want to thank the fans for their relentless support for the team and I want to congratulate the players, who were really fantastic tonight [Tuesday]," said a smiling Lopez at the post-match briefing after his side's 4-0 defeat against Australia.

Bangladesh conceded all four goals in the first half, thanks to a hatrick from Tim Cahill but the home side did not allow the Socceroos to widen the margin in the second half.

"If we did not make mistakes three times, we would not have lost the match 4-0. We did not concede any goal in the second half because our preparation was good," said Lopez, who felt this was a much better performance than the 5-0 defeat against Tajikistan last week and even better than the one Bangladesh put up against Australia in Perth.

"The condition, the synthetic turf and rain were really tough for us in Tajikistan but today [Tuesday], the players wanted to do something and they played well and made less number of mistakes.

"The boys even completed seven-eight-nine passes successfully and it seemed that we were playing against a same level of opposition. I watched the Perth match and Bangladesh hardly completed any pass successfully," said the 42-year-old coach, who will take the side to China today for an eight-team international tournament, scheduled for November 20 to 30.

## Women win first T20

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh women's cricket team made a good start against their Zimbabwean counterparts as they beat the visitors in the first T20 by 35 runs at the Sheikh Kamal International Cricket Stadium in Cox's Bazar yesterday.

Aysha Rahman hit a 50 off 54 balls, smashing five boundaries, while Sharmin Akhter added a 45-ball 35 and Fargana Hoque a 21-ball 32 as the hosts posted 125 for three wickets in their share of 20 overs.

In reply, Zimbabwe women's cricket team scored 90 runs and had two wickets in hand when they completed their 20-over quota.

Rumana Ahmed claimed three wickets for 11 runs and Salma Khatun took two for 18 runs.

## Youths leave for India

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Under-19 cricket team will leave for India today afternoon to play in a Youth Tri-Nation competition, involving the hosts and Afghanistan.

The tournament will take place at the Jadavpur University ground.

**SQUAD**

Mehedi Hasan Miraz (captain), Najmul Hossain Shanto (vice-captain), Joyraj Sheik, Pinak Ghosh, Mohammed Saif Hassan, Zakir Hasan (wicketkeeper), Shaiful Hayet, Saeed Sarker, Mehede Hasan, Mohammad Abdul Halim, Shaif Uddin, Saleh Ahmed Shawon Gazi, Ariful Islam, Sanjit Saha and Rifat Pradhan.

### FACTFILE

Mitchell Johnson made his one day international debut in 2005, going on to play 153 matches in the format culminating in Australia's triumph in the 2015 World Cup final, his final outing. He took 239 wickets at an average of 25.26.

He made his Test debut against Sri Lanka in Brisbane in November 2007, the first of 73 matches in the Baggy Green cap which netted him 313 wickets at an average of 28.40. He took 12 five-wicket hauls and 3 ten-wicket hauls.

A more than useful tail end batsman, Johnson scored 2,065 runs in Tests at an average of 22.20 with one century, an unbeaten 123 against South Africa at Cape Town in 2009. Johnson also had 11 half-centuries. In ODIs he scored 951 runs, with two fifties.

He was named International Cricket Council (ICC) Player of the Year in 2009 and 2014.



PHOTO: REUTERS

Mitchell Johnson is given an honorary send-off by his teammates at the end of the fifth day of the second Test against New Zealand in Perth, his last game, yesterday.

## Midge signs off

AFP, Perth

Fiery Australian fast bowler Mitchell Johnson Tuesday announced his retirement from all international cricket after the ongoing Test against New Zealand, joining a host of fellow veterans to recently call it quits.

Renowned for his express pace, ferocious bounce and capacity to intimidate, the 34-year-old said in a statement ahead of the fifth day's play at Perth's WACA Ground: "I feel now is the best time to say goodbye.

"It's been an incredible ride. But the ride has to come to an end at some point and to do so here at the WACA is very special."

His sole wicket moved him past Brett Lee and into fourth place on the all-time Test wickets list for Australia with 311. He sits behind Dennis Lillee (355), Glenn McGrath (563) and Shane Warne (708).

## Perth Test drawn

AFP, Perth

Retiring Australian fast bowler Mitchell Johnson claimed two final wickets as the second Test against New Zealand ended in a draw at the WACA Ground in Perth on Tuesday.

The home side declared at 385 for seven after lunch, leaving the Kiwis needing an unlikely 321 to win from 48 overs to level the series, at almost seven runs per over.

A shower delayed play for about an hour and the Kiwis should little appetite for the chase when they resumed in a match dominated by the bat on a lifeless pitch.

When stumps were called early with 20 overs left, the Kiwis were 104 for two, with Ross Taylor on 36 and Kane Williamson on 32.

Having won the first Test by 208 run at the Gabba, the result means Australia have retained the Chappell-Hadlee Trophy.

**SCORES IN BRIEF**

**AUSTRALIA:** First innings 559 for 9 decl

**NEW ZEALAND:** First innings 624

**AUSTRALIA:** Second innings 385 for 7 decl

(Smith 138, Voges 119, Nevill 35, Johnson 29, Starc 26 not out; Southee 4-97, Boult 2-77)

**NEW ZEALAND:** Second innings 104 for 2 (Latham 15, Guptill 17, Williamson 32 not out, Taylor 36 not out; Johnson 2-20)

**Result:** Match drawn

## Thank you FIFA

AL-AMIN



Thank you FIFA. Thank you for creating a wonderful atmosphere at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday, where a capacity crowd witnessed a Socceroos masterclass against a battling home side. A 4-0 win for the Socceroos on Bangladesh debut in that World Cup qualifier is just a matter of statistics. The game itself is rewarding for millions of fans in this part of the world and a victory for this global sport. And had it not been for FIFA, a true custodian of this beautiful game, we are not sure if the match of the two unequal opponents would have been played in Bangladesh following a frantic effort from the Australian FA to shift it to a neutral venue over security concerns.

We don't want say that the Australian football team's brief visit to Bangladesh belied their cricket team's decision to

postpone their away series against the Tigers last month due to security concerns.

It's a case how world governing bodies of different sports run their games. FIFA, which has more member-nations than the United Nations, is certainly the most aggressive sport body in terms of handling the game as well as taking care of its smaller federations. If you discount the IOC, you will hardly find a 180th ranked team getting the opportunity to play a 60th ranked side. And that's why football is global in its true sense. And that's why a Tim Cahill, who is the proud owner of one of three wonder goals of the 2014 World Cup in Brazil, turns up in an otherwise non-descript ground in the context of world football to score a hatrick much to awe of a capacity crowd that hardly gets the opportunity to see a star-cast of this magnitude in their backyard.

Thank you again FIFA for the turning the 'fear' into a memorable evening for football fans in this part of the world.



Dhaka Dynamites players Mustafizur Rahman and Nasir Hossain pose with Beximco vice-chairman, Salman F Rahman, franchise chairman Shayan F. Rahman, CEO Obeid R Nizam and other officials during the franchise's launching event yesterday, in which Kumar Sangakkara was named the team captain. PHOTO: COLLECTIVE

### WHAT THEY SAID

What an athlete! One of the best I ever played with.

-Michael Clarke

All the England lads will be celebrating that they won't have to face Mitch Johnson again in Australia. Great career and a great man.

-Michael Vaughan

Incredible athlete! Congrats on a magnificent career Mitch.

-AB de Villiers

Brings tears to my eyes to think that I won't play again with my great mate Mitch.

-Shane Watson