

SPORT

Fizz's shoulder a growing concern

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh pace sensation Mustafizur Rahman's latest recurrence of his shoulder injury has raised an important issue. He has undergone an MRI in England, the report of which is yet to be revealed. However, it was learnt that he has a tendon and SLAP tear on his bowling shoulder, an issue that has dogged him for quite some time.

October last year. He had been dealing with it through shoulder-related exercises since the end of 2015. It was because of that injury that he missed out on the Pakistan Super League.

A month later he took part in the Asia Cup T20 but failed to play all the matches because of a hamstring injury. He then missed the first four matches of the World T20 with a side strain and after the mega event took part in the Indian Premier League, where he suffered a hamstring injury right before the final. After his return to Bangladesh, the medical team revealed that the left-armed was not in good shape and that he lost a lot of weight.



The question however is: has the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) covered all its bases when managing one of its most prized assets?

Mustafizur's series of injuries in his short career suggests that much more needs to be done. Now let's not forget that the BCB's current medical team has been doing extremely well. Bayiedul Islam is a physio trusted by all the national players and together with trainer Mario Villavarayan and BCB sports physician Debashish Chowdhury, the recent work has been quite commendable.

He was sent to his hometown to take rest and there was also a rehabilitation programme set for him upon his return to the capital. After a couple of weeks the BCB reckoned that Mustafizur was fit enough to play for Sussex; and now he has, once again, a shoulder niggle to deal with.

The problem the left-armed is dealing with right now is the same that he had to manage last year during the National Cricket League and the Zimbabwe T20I series. It was

learnt that the left-armed may even need to go under the knife in order to permanently solve his shoulder issues. However, that's a move which is still under discussion.

According to BCB CEO Nizamuddin Chowdhury, the board is in constant touch with Mustafizur and with Sussex officials.

When viewed as an isolated incident, Mustafizur's injury seems like a small issue. However, when one looks at the series of problems that the left-armed has gone through this year, it would be illogical not to feel concerned.

For instance, they have handled the injury-prone Mashrafe Bin Mortaza, Rubel Hossain and Shafiqul Islam and Taskin Ahmed pretty well.

However, Mustafizur's fate this year has not been the same.

In January this year, he had injured his shoulder during the second T20I against Zimbabwe. At that point, BCB's sports physician had indicated that the left-armed's shoulder issue was not a new phenomenon and that he had first faced problems with his left shoulder during the National Cricket League in



Nasir Hossain (2nd from L) celebrates with his national teammates after his side went one-nil up in a practice football match which the cricketers played at the end of their day's training at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday. PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

'14-month gap too much'

SPORTS REPORTER

All-rounder Nasir Hossain has simply forgotten when he last played a Test match. He was part of the team when Bangladesh played their last Test against South Africa in Mirpur but it was back in July-August last year, so Nasir cannot be blamed if the date escapes recollection.

Lack of Test matches is the biggest concern for a rising team like Bangladesh and it will not be easy to perform to their potential when taking the field in whites after 14 months' break as they are scheduled to play their next Test against England in October this year.

"I don't know when I last played a Test. Just forgot it. Tests are really difficult, so it will be difficult for us

when we play a Test again after such a long break. You have chances to improve only when you play more games," said Nasir, who so far played 17 Tests with a batting average of 37.34, while responding to a question regarding Bangladesh's long gap between Tests during a press conference yesterday in Mirpur.

Bangladesh had wonderful success in ODI format last year but since the ODI series against Zimbabwe in November last year, the Tigers have also had a long break in their favourite format. Nasir however believes that the long break in ODIs will not be a problem when they play England at home in October.

"In ODIs our main target would be to continue our good and consistent performance in this format. We have not played ODIs for the last 10 months but I don't think it will be a major problem and we are going to

play some practice matches, so that will also help us," Nasir, who has so far played 56 ODIs with an average of 32.39, opined.

Despite impressive performances, Nasir's place in the team as a spin-bowling all-rounder is far from guaranteed; he was very much an irregular member in the T20 team and the all-rounder also admitted that there is huge competition for places in the team. Additionally, the arrival of a player like Mosaddek Hossain has further heightened the competition.

"It's not only for my place but now it's difficult for everybody to keep their place in the team because the number of performers has increased. In the national team now, nobody can say that he owns his place and without any doubt the competition is now more than earlier," said Nasir.

More bowlers to be included in assessment

SPORTS REPORTER

The bowling review committee of Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) has decided to bring more bowlers with suspect actions under their scanner.

"We are now working with 10 bowlers [with suspect actions] but we have decided to bring a few more bowlers who were reported during the 2014-15 season First Division Cricket League because we want to go deep into this problem," said review committee chairman Jalal Yunus yesterday.

"Nearly 39 bowlers were reported during the 2014-15 season in the First Division League where some were reported even five to six times and we have decided to include those bowlers. When a bowler was reported for six times his problem is chronic. We want to examine them and we will give them a timeline to rectify their actions before taking part in any competition under BCB," he added.

He however said that there was good news as young spinner Sanjit Saha's action now looks okay. Sanjit had been banned from bowling after the International Cricket Council found his action to be illegal during the ICC Under-19 World Cup early this year.

Rahmatganj hold MSC

SPORTS REPORTER

The JB Bangladesh Premier League continues to produce upsets as minnows Rahmatganj MFS held Mohammedan SC to a 1-1 draw at the MA Aziz Stadium in Chittagong yesterday.

Mohammedan needed the crucial 81st minute penalty conversion from Ismail Bangoura since Congolese striker Siyo Zunapio's 17th minute strike had kept the Old Dhaka outfit on the front foot of the game for quite awhile.

It was the third upset to come in the first three matches of the league after Sheikh Russel lost to newly-promoted Uttar Baridhara 1-0 while holders Sheikh Jamal DC managed a 1-1 draw against Arambagh KS on the opening day.

While the draw was yet another evidence that the difference in power between teams is shrinking, it also highlighted the sorry state of Mohammedan, who have failed to reach the knockout stages of both the Independence Cup and Federation Cup earlier this season. The last meeting between the two ended in a 2-2 during the group stages of the Federation Cup.

Rahmatganj entertained spectators with their spirited show and by creating a few scoring chances in the first half.

Zunapio came close to taking the lead for his side in the 10th minute after availing a missed pass from a Mohammedan defender but the Congolese striker failed to beat goalkeeper Mohammad Nehal one-on-one. Then Didarul Alam tried his luck from distance in the 14th minute, but Nehal disarmed the shot with a diving save.

However, Zunapio made amends for his earlier miss by turning in a cross from Abdullah with an acrobatic side-volley three minutes later.

At the other end, Bangoura and Aminur Rahman Sajib came close to levelling the margin, but Rahmatganj goalkeeper Rafiqur Rahman Masum was equal to the task on both occasions.

MOHAMMEDAN	1	-	1	RAHMATGANJ
ABAHANI	1	-	1	CTG ABAHANI

Mohammedan eventually found a lifeline in the 81st minute when Rahmatganj captain Shawkat Russel handled the ball inside his own box, allowing Bangoura to take advantage and level the margin.

SPOILS SHARED BY ABAHANIS

The most eagerly awaited fixture of the league so far saw four-time champions Abahani held to a 1-1 draw by their port city counterparts in the second match of the day.

Promising winger Rubel Mia cancelled out a 35th minute header from Sunday Chizoba in the 76th minute to rescue big-budget Chittagong Abahani from making a frustrating start.

Abahani had come into the match on the back of their Federation Cup triumph, but had a score to settle as they were beaten by their Chittagong namesake in the final of the season's curtain-raising Independence Cup.

The Dhaka outfit dominated the first half and took the lead through Sunday. Chittagong Abahani coach Jozef Pavlic strengthened his attacking line-up in the second half and the move paid dividends as the port city side scored a deserved equaliser through Rubel.



Rahmatganj striker Siyo Zunapio performs a somersault after giving his side the lead in their JB Bangladesh Premier League match at the MA Aziz Stadium in Chittagong yesterday. PHOTO: ANURUP KANTI DAS

Ashwin spins WI to innings defeat

AFP, North Sound

Ravichandran Ashwin completed a magnificent all-round performance with seven wickets to bowl India to a crushing victory by an innings and 92 runs on the fourth day of the first Test against the West Indies in Antigua on Sunday.

His haul of seven for 83 off 25 overs followed his third Test hundred - 113 - in India's massive first innings total of 566 for eight declared at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium.

Resuming their second innings following on at the overnight position of 21 for one, the West Indies were dismissed for 231 in another abject batting display, despite half-centuries by Marlon Samuels and Carlos Brathwaite and a ninth-wicket stand of 95 between Brathwaite and Devendra Bishoo (45).

This result was India's largest margin of victory in a Test match outside of Asia.

"We were really eager to get going in this series," said a delighted Indian captain Virat Kohli after the match.

"Everything came together nicely, from the batting performance to dismissing the West Indies twice."

Wicketless throughout the first innings and for the first nine overs of his second innings effort, Ashwin scythed through the heart of the home side's batting in the afternoon session, reaping a five-wicket haul and then finishing off the match with the last two wickets just after tea to give India a 1-0 lead in the four-match series.

SCOREBOARD				
INDIA: First innings 566 for 8 decl				
WEST INDIES: First innings 243				
WEST INDIES: Second innings				
K Brathwaite lbw b Sharma	2			
Chandrika c Saha b Ashwin	31			
Bravo c Rahane b Yadav	30			
Samuels b Ashwin	50			
Blackwood c Kohli b Ashwin	0			
Chase c sub (Rahul) b Ashwin	8			
Dowrich lbw b Mishra	9			
Holder b Ashwin	16			
C Brathwaite not out	51			
Bishoo c Pujara b Ashwin	45			
Gabriel b Ashwin	4			
Extras: (nb-5)	5			
Total: (All out in 78 overs)	231			
Fall of wickets: 1-2, 2-21, 3-88, 4-92, 5-101, 6-106, 7-120, 8-132, 9-227.				
Bowler	O	M	R	W
Sharma	11	2	27	1
Shami	10	3	26	0
Yadav	13	4	34	1
Ashwin	25	8	83	7
Mishra	19	3	61	1

Eng level series with big win

AFP, Manchester

James Anderson marked his return to international duty with three wickets as England beat Pakistan by a massive 330 runs to win the second Test at his Old Trafford home ground on Monday.

Pakistan, set a mammoth 565 for victory, were bowled out for 234 in their second innings after tea on the fourth day.

This was England's fifth-biggest Test win in terms of runs.

But England's joy in levelling the four-match series at 1-1 was tempered by the sight of all-rounder Ben Stokes going off injured in Monday's second session.

England's Joe Root, who made a Test-best 254 in a mammoth first innings 589 for eight declared, was named man-of-the-match.

The first innings also saw England captain Alastair Cook make 105 -- his 29th Test hundred.

England's two senior batsmen combined again in a second-innings total of 173 for one declared.

Left-handed opener Cook made 76 not out and vice-captain Root 71 not out, with the duo putting on 105 for the second wicket before the skipper called a halt on Monday morning.

Anderson returning to Test cricket after missing Pakistan's 75-run win in the first Test at Lord's with a shoulder injury, then struck twice to remove both Shan Masood (one) and Azhar Ali (eight).

But with Pakistan on the ropes, England saw Stokes injure himself while bowling.

After delivering his second ball of the 22nd over, with Pakistan 68 for two, the Durham pace bowler pulled up with a right calf strain and left the field.

An England spokesman said the 25-year-old Stokes, would undergo a scan on Tuesday to determine the full extent of the injury.

Off-spinner Moeen Ali, completing the over, was then hit for six by Mohammad Hafeez.

Two balls later Ali bowled a no-ball full toss that sailed above Hafeez's head. Ali, however, regained his composure to dismiss both Hafeez (42) and Younis Khan (28).

Hafeez gave a simple bat/pad catch to Gary Ballance at short leg.

Pakistan's 83 for three became 102 for four when Younis, trying to loft Ali over the top, was caught at long-on.

Pakistan captain Misbah-ul-Haq needlessly chanced his arm in hitting Ali for six.

He was unlucky to fall to Chris Woakes for 35 when he dragged a full toss onto his stumps.

SCOREBOARD				
ENGLAND: First innings 589-8 decl				
PAKISTAN: First innings 198				
ENGLAND: Second innings (overnight 98-1)				
Cook not out	76			
Hales c Sarfraz b Amir	24			
Root not out	71			
Total: (For 1 wkt dec in 30 overs)	173			
Fall of wicket: 1-68.				
Bowler	O	M	R	W
Amir	11	2	43	1
PAKISTAN: Second innings				
Hafeez c Ballance b Moeen	42			
Masood c Cook b Anderson	1			
Azhar lbw b Anderson	8			
Younis c Hales b Moeen	28			
Misbah b Woakes	35			
Shafiq lbw b Anderson	39			
Sarfraz c Bairstow b Woakes	7			
Yasir lbw Ali	19			
Wahab c Cook b Root	10			
Amir c Broad b Woakes	29			
Rahat not out	8			
Total: (For 10 wks in 70.3 overs)	234			
Fall of wickets: 1-7, 2-25, 3-83, 4-102, 5-145, 6-163, 7-167, 8-190, 9-208, 10-234				
Bowler	O	M	R	W
Anderson	16	2	41	3
Moeen	18.4	1	88	3
Woakes	15.3	2	41	3
Root	1	1	0	1



England pace ace James Anderson was back on song after missing the first Test, scalping three crucial wickets as the home team turned the screws on Pakistan on the fourth day of the second Test at Old Trafford yesterday. PHOTO: AFP

Mariners, Rana punished

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Hockey Federation (BHF) fined Premier League champions Dhaka Mariners Youngs Club Tk 5 lakh and suspended the club's general secretary Hasan Ullah Khan Rana for one year yesterday as compensation for vandalising the VIP gallery of the Maulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium earlier this month.

"Most of the members favoured a bigger punishment for Mariner Youngs Club. But as the club became champions for the first time and since we, the federation, are the guardian of all clubs, the meeting decided to fine the club Tk 5 lakh and to suspend its general secretary Rana for one season for their role in the vandalising of the VIP gallery during the last match of the league," said BHF general secretary Abdus Sadeque after an executive committee meeting.

The defacing of the gallery took place following an altercation between a Mariners official and a former national hockey player during the finals fixture between Mariners and Usha KC on July 1. Mariners, who were trailing Usha at a point, went on to win the crucial match 3-2 and claim their maiden league title.

The Motijheel club have been asked to pay the fine within one month or face more severe consequences.

"According to the bylaws, if Mariners do not pay the fine, their achieved points from the league will be deducted and as a result they may lose their title," concluded Sadeque.