

# SPORT



PHOTOS: COLLECTED/REUTERS

**ROARING TIGERS:** Captain Mashrafe Bin Mortaza (L) and Mahmudullah Riyad (R), one from the field and one from the dressing room, let out deafening roars after Bangladesh defeated New Zealand by five wickets in their Champions Trophy match at the Sophia Gardens in Cardiff yesterday to keep their semifinal hopes alive.

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## Beyond my imagination: Mash A partnership built on the basics

Star Sport Desk

When Mahmudullah Riyad arrived at the crease with Bangladesh at 33 for four, many people may have switched off their television sets and stopped talking about the match at hand. As the heroic pair revealed after the match, Mahmudullah and Shakib Al Hasan did the same.

They did not talk, but their bats did and the result was a mammoth 224-run fifth-wicket partnership which brought a historic five-wicket win for Bangladesh in their Champions Trophy match against New Zealand in Cardiff yesterday.

"The best thing about our partnership was we didn't talk too much, we just wanted to bat. We were just batting and wanted to be positive. Early on it was swinging. Once it stopped swinging, it was easier to bat. I think Tamim batted superbly this tournament. Losing him early on was a bit of a shock. We just wanted to hit the gaps and put the bad balls away," Mahmudullah, who scored an unbeaten 102, said after the match.

"Like he [Mahmudullah] said we, did not talk. We did not want to chase that down. We just wanted to bat 40 overs and see where we were. Winning a match in an ICC tournament is a big thing. From there, we can only go forward," Shakib added after collecting the player-of-the-match award for his outstanding 115-run knock.

This win is special for every Bangladeshi, but the significance of the victory is different for captain Mashrafe Bin Mortaza because he is the only remaining part of the Bangladesh team which clinched a famous victory against Australia by the same margin at the same venue

12 years back.

"It's a great feeling. I was here both times [in 2005 and here against New Zealand yesterday]. The boys made the chances count and that's a great feeling," Mashrafe said at the post-match presentation.

At the post-match press briefing, Mashrafe said: "I don't know whether we will play in the semi-



Mosaddek Hossain's off-spin was the surprise package that yielded three crucial wickets in the death overs and restricted New Zealand to what seemed a manageable total.

nal, but if we do then we will put up a much better performance. If we can't make it to the semifinals then there's nothing we can do. We achieved what we wanted to in this match. I can't ask Australia to lose the match, so I wish the best of luck to both teams."

When asked when he started to believe that the Tigers had a chance to win the match, Mashrafe responded: "When we crossed 100, I started to believe. But that they would score 200 is phenomenal. It was beyond imagination."

Mashrafe added that this today's was a kind of game which Bangladesh would need to win if they wanted to reach the next level.

"We proved a lot with this win today and we can move forward with this kind of result. We have to rate this higher than any of the other wins because this will elevate our cricket to the next level," the ODI skipper continued.

"We won at home and now we have also started winning away matches. So now people will start to say that we really are a good team. We did our job, now we will be looking forward to tomorrow's match."

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In the age of the turf singing four and the huge six, the humble single is often overlooked. But at 33 for four, boundaries and sixes were justifiably far from Shakib Al Hasan and Mahmudullah Riyad's minds. The expert manner in which the duo kept picking the singles and doubles was what made the difference in their mammoth 224-run partnership.

Among the four big batsmen of Bangladesh -- the other two being Tamim Iqbal and Mushfiqur Rahim -- the Shakib-Mahmudullah association is not a very high-scoring one, as they have only had two century partnerships, with the last one coming in January 2011. Yesterday, it was hard to see why. The duo notched the highest Bangladesh partnership for any wicket, the highest Championship Trophy fifth-wicket stand and also the highest ODI partnership at Sophia Gardens.

### PARTNERSHIP: 224 (209)

SHAKIB (114)		MAHMUDULLAH (102)	
43	singles	40	
9	doubles	9	
11	fours	7	
1	sixes	2	

## Australia v England Tigers' eyes on today's match

Afp, Birmingham

There may not be many fans of the England cricket team in Bangladesh, but it is certain that everyone in the country will be rooting for them after Bangladesh's win over New Zealand, when England meet Australia in the final Champions Trophy Group A match in Birmingham today.

Despite the Tigers' sublime five-wicket victory over the Kiwis yesterday, their fate in the tournament rests on today's match. Bangladesh are one point ahead of Australia, meaning that a win for the English, who have already qualified for the semifinals, would see the Tigers through to the their first Champions Trophy semifinal berth.

However, Australia remain confident of beating England in their Champions Trophy clash, even if defeating the English weather has so far proved beyond them.

Steven Smith's side endured the frustration of having Monday's clash with Bangladesh abandoned due to rain, just days after their opening Group A fixture against New Zealand was also washed out.

On both occasions, it has been Australia who were batting in the early stages of their innings when bad weather ended play.

With two points from their two matches, Australia now have to beat England to be certain of a place in the semi-finals of a tournament featuring the world's top eight one-day intentional teams.

"I think it makes the equation pretty simple for us," said Smith, whose side suffered an Edgbaston defeat by England during the last Champions Trophy four years ago.

"We have to beat England and then I think we're through. I haven't really read into anything else that's happened."

Australia's pacemen, led by Mitchell Starc, have started to find their form and they would love nothing more than a go at the old enemy this weekend.

England, by contrast, have managed to dodge the bad weather sufficiently to beat both Bangladesh and New Zealand in convincing fashion to book their semi-final spot regardless of Saturday's outcome.

But captain Eoin Morgan wants no let-up against World Cup champions Australia as England go in search of their first major ICC 50-over title.

### BD-NZ SCOREBOARD

New Zealand		R/B	4s/6s		
Guptill lbw b Rubel	33/35	4/1			
Ronchi c Mustafizur b Taskin	16/18	2/0			
Williamson run out	57/69	5/0			
Taylor c Mustafizur b Taskin	63/82	6/0			
Broom c Tamim b Mosaddek	36/40	3/0			
Neesham st Mushfiqur					
b Mosaddek	23/24	3/0			
Anderson lbw b Mosaddek	0/1	0/0			
Santner not out	14/18	0/0			
Milne b Mustafizur	7/8	0/0			
Southee not out	10/5	2/0			
Extras: (w-6)	6				
Total: (For 8 wickets in 50 overs)	265				
Did not bat: TA Boult					
Fall of wickets: 1-46, 2-69, 3-152, 4-201, 5-228, 6-229, 7-240, 8-252.					
Bowler		O	M	R	W
Mashrafe	10	1	45	0	
Mustafizur	9	0	52	1	
Taskin	8	0	43	2	
Rubel	10	0	60	1	
Shakib	10	0	52	0	
Mosaddek	3	0	13	3	
BANGLADESH		R/B	4s/6s		
Tamim lbw b Southee	0/2	0/0			
Soumya lbw b Southee	3/13	0/0			
Subbir c Ronchi b Southee	8/9	2/0			
Mushfiqur b Milne	14/34	2/0			
Shakib b Boult	114/115	11/1			
Mahmudullah not out	102/107	8/2			
Mosaddek not out	7/4	1/0			
Extras: (lb-2, w-18)	20				
Total: (For 5 wickets in 47.2 overs)	268				
Did not bat: Taskin Ahmed, Mashrafe Mortaza*, Rubel Hossain, Mustafizur Rahman					
Fall of wickets: 1-0, 2-10, 3-12, 4-33, 5-257.					
Bowler		O	M	R	W
Southee	9	1	45	3	
Boult	10	0	48	1	
Milne	9.2	0	58	1	
Neesham	4	0	30	0	
Santner	10	0	47	0	
Anderson	3	0	19	0	
KS Williamson	2	0	19	0	



Bangladesh pacer Taskin Ahmed had a telling effect on the bowling by keeping things quiet but it was the run-out of New Zealand skipper Kane Williamson (INSET) that stopped New Zealand's momentum yesterday.

