

Spin on Tigers' minds

SPORTS REPORTER

Will Bangladesh stick to the same ploy they employed against England in the home series against last year regarding the pitch when they take on Australia in Chittagong and Dhaka?

That is the impression one may get if the words of some of the Bangladesh cricketers currently engaged in a fitness camp. Opener Imrul Kayes is anticipating the sort of turning pitches seen during the England series after off-spinner and the hero of the last Bangladesh-England series Mehedi Hasan spoke in favour of it. And apparently they were looking back to that series, where Tigers won the second Test at Mirpur to go level, to take inspiration ahead of their home challenge against Australia next month.

"I believe that we are equally good in one-dayers and Tests at home. We played against England in tough conditions and we got the result. I think conditions will be the same against Australia. We are mentally preparing for the challenge," said Imrul while talking to reporters at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

Bangladesh competed admirably on such a surface against England where pitches started turning quite early. They came within 23 runs of victory in the first Test in Chittagong before taking all 10 wickets in a single session to level the series in Mirpur with magical bowling from Mehedi.

While the surface assisted spinners heavily, it also posed a big challenge to the Bangladesh batsmen. The home side however was up to the task, especially Tamim Iqbal, who was outstanding. On the other hand Imrul was a bit aggressive and it was his 120-ball 78 in the second innings of the second Test at Mirpur that helped set a target beyond England's reach to help the Tigers complete a historic 108-run win.

There is nothing wrong if the players sing praises of that kind of surface as they have the confidence that their batsman can handle it and given Australia's reputation of struggling in the subcontinent.

Like his other colleagues the left-hander however was emphasised on the importance of the ongoing fitness camp as he believes that one can play good cricket for at least one or two years if he can attend this kind of camp. "Of course I am enjoying the fitness camp. We get this kind of opportunity once in a year. Everybody is serious here and personally I am also very serious [about it]."



Mushfiqur Rahim hit the weights at the BCB Academy Gymnasium as the Tigers continued their fitness camp to get into peak shape ahead of the two-match Test series against Australia.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

CA in selection headache

STAR SPORT DESK

The cancellation of Australia A team's tour of South Africa because of the ongoing pay dispute has put Cricket Australia selectors in a difficult spot as Australia's tour of Bangladesh approaches, according to a report on Cricket Australia's website.

Trevor Hohns, Greg Chappell and Darren Lehmann have a selection headache as they seek to replace injured pacer Mitchell Starc.

The selection panel is yet to decide on a fast bowler who can be Starc's replacement in the squad.

The cancellation of the A team's tour has meant paceman Jackson Bird, Chadd Sayers, Jason Behrendoff and Chris Tremain were unable to push for the final spot in Australia's 13-man Test squad for Bangladesh tour.

Leg-spinner Mitchell Swanson also could make the Test team.

The Test Squad is scheduled to assemble in Darwin on August 10 and the selectors may opt to test the young spinner and the quicks in the pre-Bangladesh tour camp.

According to the Cricket Australia website, both CA and ACA remain upbeat that pay talks will advance before the squad is due in Bangladesh on August 18.

Irfan ton powers HP

SPORTS REPORTER

Irfan Sukkur slammed an unbeaten hundred as the BCB High Performance team scored 312 for six on the opening day of the three-day match against a Northern Territory Invitational XI at the Marrara Cricket Ground 1 in Darwin yesterday.

Irfan hit an unbeaten 104 off 139 balls that contained 15 boundaries. The touring side, who whitewashed the same opponents in the five-match one-day series, won the toss and decided to bat first.

Captain Liton Das and Mehedi Maruf began confidently before the former was dismissed for 13 runs to put an end to the 44-run opening stand. Maruf however made 87 off 138 balls that saw six fours and two sixes.

The BCB High Performance team declared their innings after batting the day's full 90 overs.



World media reacts to hate crime

STAR SPORT DESK



The alleged hate crime against Tamim Iqbal and his family in Stratford caught the attention of the world's media, with news outlets in England and elsewhere carrying the story. Some condemned and lamented the alleged attack, with sympathetic comments below the line, and most were written with the underlying assumption that a hate crime had taken place, despite Tamim's denial on his Facebook page.

The UK's Daily Telegraph how-

ever reported that claims of an acid throwing incident were unfounded.

UK-based Daily Mail wrote in an article titled 'Tamim Iqbal denies alleged acid attack on his family': "Sportsmail understands Tamim reported an incident to his county on Monday that took place near his Stratford home.

"This is believed to have involved verbal abuse at a restaurant next to the Olympic Park which unsettled a family already concerned about the potential for hate attacks in London," the report added.

The Daily Telegraph cited an anonymous source close to Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) who said that the insults were racially motivated.

"There was an incident involving insults being thrown at him and his family, and led to him going back home," Daily Telegraph quoted the source as saying.

The Independent reported on Tamim's departure and cited The Daily Star in an article titled 'Tamim Iqbal forced to deny alleged acid attack on his family the reason behind his sudden Essex departure.'

The Daily Mail added in their

report that Tamim and Essex both tried to play down the incident.

"No complaint was made to the police and it seems Essex and Tamim are playing down the incident. Whatever the truth, it is a huge blow to cricket and east London's Bangladeshi community," the report concluded.

The New Zealand Herald cited The Daily Star's report and wrote: "The wife of leading Bangladesh cricketer Tamim Iqbal was the target of an attempted hate crime in the United Kingdom on Tuesday (New Zealand time), according to a report by the Daily Star."

ACA to meet CA, Sutherland today

Players give CA 3 weeks before decision on Bangladesh tour

AGENCIES, Canberra

The Australian Cricketers' Association (ACA) has hit back at Cricket Australia (CA) chairman David Peever's comments as the game's warring parties start the long road to resolving the ugly pay dispute.

Talks have been going on between CA and the ACA this week but Sutherland's participation is significant given the players union's insistence that no resolution could be reached without him. While sources from both CA and the ACA agree progress is being made, opinion is divided as to how much.

The ACA issued a statement in response to Peever's comments on Thursday defending their representation of players.

"The timing of Mr Peever's letter is disappointing because it does nothing to further any progress that we are trying to make," an ACA spokesman said. "It is almost two weeks after CA have forced the players in to unemployment and is refusing to back pay them, despite the players training for free."

The timing of Peever's comments

contacted CA frustrated by what they perceive to be a lack of communication from the governing body over the issue.

Sponsors are now contacting the Australian Cricketers Association's The Cricketers' Brand, which was set up to manage players' intellectual property, for access.

Next month's tour of Bangladesh is still in danger of being called off, with players believed to be giving CA three weeks to make satisfactory progress before they make a decision.

The timing of Peever's comments

slamming the ACA's "reckless" tactics raised eyebrows within the union and among industry insiders.

However, there is still a strong feeling among players and agents that Peever has played a major role in the feud. While some suggested Peever's remarks were a sign both parties remained a long way apart, others feel he has used the progress as his last chance to blast the ACA before a resolution is struck.

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