



WELCOME TO THE TIGERS' DEN: Australia opener David Warner (R) was the first of the three quick casualties in the final four overs of a fascinating opening day of the first Test that saw the Tigers roaring back on top. The Aussies were reeling at 18-3 at stumps, chasing Bangladesh's 260 at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday. PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

The value of 50s

SPORTS REPORTER



The tally of one hundred Test matches combined between Bangladesh stalwarts Shakib Al Hasan and Tamim Iqbal had a telling impact on the first day of the first Test against Australia as the two experienced campaigners displayed why they are the two most talked about cricketers in the history of Bangladesh cricket.

Expectations were sky high when they stepped onto the ground on their 50th Test match for the nation, with the hosts in dire straits after having elected to bat first.

Bangladesh were reeling at 10 for three inside four overs, with Tamim at one end, when Shakib came to the crease. The pair started to repair the damage and, more importantly, started to dominate the opposition.

Both left-handers reached their fifties and the bond these two cricketers showed hardly reflected the fact that they have only had five partnerships in their ten-year-plus Test career.

The responsibility, maturity, ability to absorb the pressure and counter-attack against a team like Australia, that too while recovering from a difficult position, to surpass their previous best partnership of 132 runs against Zimbabwe back in November 2014 was just nothing but a true reflection of the experience of the dynamic duo.

However, the belief in each other did not come from those five partnerships but from the bond in the dressing room and of course from playing for the country together for nearly a decade.

Tamim was the first to depart after reaching his 23rd fifty. He scored a patient 144-ball 71, which featured five fours and three sixes, and his departure broke the highest partnership of the innings of 155 runs.

Shakib, meanwhile, was inching towards his sixth Test hundred when a Nathan Lyon delivery popped up, taking the edge and carrying to the slip fielder after he had raced on to 84 with 11 fours.

"It was quite challenging to bat out there. I think Tamim and I applied ourselves. It was an important partnership," Shakib said at the post-day press conference in Mirpur. "We may be in the driving seat but we need to take seven more wickets. They [Australia] have some batting left too, so we have to focus well. Every day gives you a new situation in Test cricket."

"We don't really talk that much. We just kept batting for as long as possible. The job was slightly easier for us since we are quite experienced now. This is our 50th Test. We were batting well in the second session but those two deliveries kicked on us, costing us the wickets," Shakib added.

After the departure of the 30-year-old, the home side had to face the music from the Aussie bowlers. However, Nasir Hossain and Mehedi Hasan tried to consolidate until the latter was controversially given out, adjudged to have nicked it to short leg, with no reviews remaining.

Shakib opined that it was a tough call from the umpire and had the review been available things would have been different for the home side.

"It is quite important because Miraz wasn't out. If he had that review left, his partnership with Nasir could have been extended. They were batting well together," he said.

According to the number one all-rounder, the pitches in Bangladesh are different from the other sub-continental countries like India and Sri Lanka.

The southpaw termed Aussie skipper Steve Smith, who is still at the crease, as the biggest threat for Bangladesh and said that it will be crucial to bowl in the right areas to dismiss the visitors.

ধুলো ময়লার দ্বি শেষ!

BD-AUS SCOREBOARD

BANGLADESH: First innings R/B 4s/6s
 Tamim c Warner b Maxwell 71/144 5/3
 Soumya c Handscomb b Cummins 8/8 2/0
 Imrul c Wade b Cummins 0/6 0/0
 Sabbir c Cummins 0/1 0/0
 Shakib c Smith b Lyon 84/133 11/0
 Mushfiqur lbw b Agar 18/50 2/0
 Nasir lbw b Agar 23/61 3/0
 Mehedy c Handscomb b Lyon 18/38 2/0
 Taijul lbw b Lyon 4/10 1/0
 Shaiful c Hazlewood b Agar 13/17 3/0
 Mustafizur not out 0/7 0/0
 Extras: (b-15, lb-3, nb-2, w-1) 21
 Total: (All out in 78.5 overs) 260
 Fall of wickets: 1-10, 2-10, 3-10, 4-165, 5-188, 6-198, 7-240, 8-246, 9-246, 10-260.

AUSTRALIA: First innings R/B 4s/6s
 Warner lbw b Mehedy 8/15 1/0
 Renshaw not out 6/25 1/0
 Khawaja run out 1/2 0/0
 Lyon lbw b Shakib 0/5 0/0
 Smith not out 3/7 0/0
 Extras: 0
 Total: (For 3 wks in 9 overs) 18
 Fall of wickets: 1-9, 2-14, 3-14.
 To bat: Handscomb, Maxwell, Wade, Agar, Cummins, Hazlewood.

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Shaiful	2	0	8	0

'Bangladesh have the momentum'

SAKEB SUBHAN



Nathan Lyon walked into the media room at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium yesterday around half an hour after he, as the nightwatchman, was the last to fall on a 13-wicket day that saw Bangladesh out for 260 and Australia teetering at 18 for three. Given the state of the game after the first day of the first Test, for a man who prides himself on not being 'about personal success', his cheery demeanour could not be explained away solely by the fact that he surpassed Richie Benaud in the Australian wicket-takers' chart and became the eighth Australian to 250 Test wickets.

"It's in the balance to be fair," Lyon said when asked about the state of the game, not without a little of the sportsman's stubbornness. "You can probably look at Bangladesh who have the momentum at the moment. [But] to lose the toss and bowl a team out for 260 or under 300 is always a good result for a bowling team. It's not

ideal losing three wickets but that's the game.

"We've got two very good batsmen [at the crease], one's the number one batter in the world and Matt Renshaw is a very talented young cricketer. There're no demons in that pitch yet so it's a good opportunity for our batters."

He was fulsome in his praise for the partnership of the day, a 155-run stand that could possibly separate the sides once the Test is done and dusted.

"Tamim [Iqbal] and Shakib [Al Hasan] took the game on, which is what you have to do in such conditions," said Lyon after the day's play. "They were brave in their batting and played some incredible shots. Hats off to them."

He gave credit to Pat Cummins for the early-three-wicket spell that enabled Australia to get into the match after losing a crucial toss.

"I think Patty cracked the game open for us. Patty's an unbelievable bowler, so is Josh [Hazlewood]. The amount of effort that goes in from those two to go in and perform like they did in those types of conditions. It was pretty tough out there, I'm not going to lie. It was probably one

of the toughest days I've had in Test cricket with the heat and the humidity."

A veteran of 68 Tests, Lyon expressed a bit of surprise that the pitch started turning from the word go, but expressed confidence in his spin attack pitted against Bangladesh's spin trio of Mehedi Hasan Miraz, Shakib and Taijul Islam. "Your spinners have to bowl well and bowl well in partnerships and be consistent. That's what myself, Ashton [Agar] and Glenn Maxwell are trying to do, be as consistent as possible and challenge Bangladesh's defence, and that's going to be a big thing. I'm not really fazed by how many spinners there are in the Bangladesh side -- they've got three, we've got three."

Lyon seemed comfortable about their chances. "We need to bat well, but in partnerships and bat deep. I have faith in our batters to come out and do that tomorrow." He has been here 68 times, and gave the impression that he knows that Australia's current situation is no cause for alarm; there is a lot of work still to do for either side to tilt the scales that he said are currently balanced.

SAFF U-15 C'SHIP BD thump Bhutan 8-0 to finish third

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh finished third in the SAFF Under-15 Championship after a massive 8-0 win over Bhutan in the place-deciding match as India emerged champions with a 2-1 win over Nepal in Kathmandu yesterday.

Having been eliminated from the semifinals stage, defending champions Bangladesh managed to salvage some pride with a comprehensive win over Bhutan, the team they had beaten 3-0 in the group stages.

Bangladesh dominated the match from the outset and took a comfortable 3-0 lead in the first half and added five more goals after the break.

Miraj Molla and Raja Sheikh struck a brace each while Yeasin Arafat, Mohammad Akash, Arif Hossain and Faisal Ahmed netted one goal each.

Meanwhile, Faisal Ahmed, who scored seven goals in four matches and had his name on the score-sheet after every fixture, was awarded the Golden Boot.

A future friend or foe?

MAZHAR UDDIN



The list of players who played cricket for two separate nations is quite select: twenty six cricketers represented two international level teams, fourteen played Test cricket, nine have played ODIs, four of whom have played in the T20 format as well. Only two cricketers in the history of the game played for two teams across different formats.

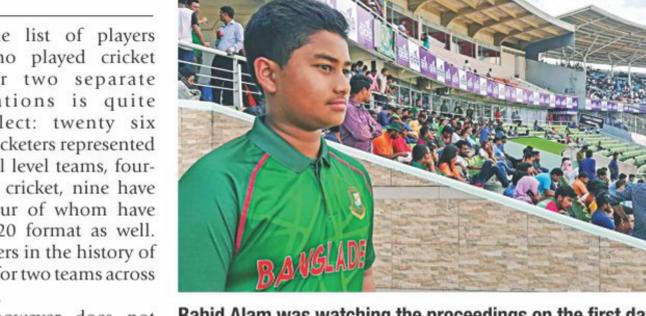
Bangladesh however does not have a single player on the list nor has anyone on it represented the country. However, 13-year-old Australia-born Bangladeshi Rahid Alam may be the first.

The son of businessman Jahangir Alam, Rahid is a regular feature in Sydney's Beverly Hills Eagles Club and was also the captain of the New South Wales Under-12 team in 2014.

At age seven he initially began his cricketing journey under Barry John Richardson, who worked with Sri Lanka legend Sanath Jayasuriya and was the Waugh brothers' coach during the age level stage.

Before Richardson passed from cancer in 2012 he termed Rahid a 'future prospect'.

Rahid, an opening batsman who doubles as a wicketkeeper, caught coaches' attention when he scored



Rahid Alam was watching the proceedings on the first day of the first Test at Mirpur yesterday between Australia -- the country of his birth -- and Bangladesh -- his ancestral home. PHOTO: MAZHAR UDDIN

587 runs, including six fifties, from 13 matches in a calendar season.

No cricketer from Beverly Hills Eagles Club has represented Australia so far, but club officials are optimistic about Rahid's chances of making it on the biggest stage.

Interestingly Rahid, who idolises Bangladesh's Mushfiqur Rahim and Australia's Usman Khawaja, came all the way from Australia with his father to Bangladesh to watch his favourite players from both teams as he dreams to represent either side one day.

The youngster plans to return here later this year and spend some time at the BKSP to try his luck there.

"My favourite player from Bangladesh is Mushfiqur Rahim and

from Australia it's Usman Khawaja. I dream of playing for Bangladesh and for Australia as well, but at the moment I'm just enjoying my game. My father encourages me all the time and incited me to come and watch Australia play in Bangladesh.

"I have a plan to return to Bangladesh later this year and hopefully I will play in BKSP but at the same time I would like to continue my cricket in Australia. My initial target is to reach the age-level phase in New South Wales and later the Sheffield Shield followed by the A team and then the Australia national team," Rahid told the Daily Star at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

SAFF C'ship deferred to Sept 2018

SPORTS REPORTER

The SAFF Championship has been deferred yet again as it will be held from September 4 to 15 next year in Dhaka, confirmed South Asian Football Federation's general secretary Anwarul Haque Helal.

"The SAFF meeting today [Sunday] decided to hold the SAFF Championship in Dhaka from September 4-15 with the participation of seven teams. The inclusion of Afghanistan was not accepted by the members," Helal said over the phone after the meeting in Kathmandu, Nepal yesterday.

The apex football tournament of the region was initially scheduled for December 25, 2016 - January 5, 2017 but the All India Football Federation did not give its approval owing to the deferment of the franchise-based Indian Super League (ISL). The meeting also decided to hold the SAFF U-15 and U-18 Women's Championships, SAFF Women's Championship and SAFF Under-15 Championship next year.

PERFORMER OF THE DAY

SHAKIB AL HASAN



ACE all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan yet again proved why he has been on top of the all-rounders' rankings in all three different formats for such a long time. The 30-year-old batted with a lot of authority and aggressive intent to wrest back the initial pressure that Bangladesh had found themselves in following three early dismissals. While his partner for 155 runs, Tamim Iqbal, batted with caution and restraint for most parts, Shakib chose to take the attack to the Australians with his 133-ball 84, which featured 11 boundaries. Later in the day, the left-arm spinner came on to dismiss Nathan Lyon as Bangladesh tightened the noose on the Aussie batting, reducing their innings to 18 for 3.

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