



'Now they will show a lot more respect'

SPORTS REPORTER

When Bangladesh were just a wicket away from achieving a historic Test victory over Australia, with Taijul Islam operating over the wicket against Josh Hazlewood, ace all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan walked up to the spinner and advised him to go around the wicket with an angle which will shape in to the left-hander.

Taijul followed the advice of his senior teammate and the reward was imminent. He trapped Hazlewood leg before, with a straighter delivery that pitched in line and hit right in front as the Australia tailender missed the line of the ball, to wrap up the victory.

This is just a glimpse into an otherwise overlooked aspect of the contribution of Shakib, who has been enthusiastic and pumped up right through this Test match as he has been to the build up to this game. Unlike on many previous occasions, Shakib had seemed more involved in every aspect of this game, perhaps more than any other player, to make his 50th Test a memorable one.

His persistence yielded results with ten wickets – the only Bangladeshi to do so twice in Test cricket – and with his fifty in the first innings, he also became only the second cricketer after New Zealand great Sir Richard Hadlee to take ten wickets and score a fifty in a Test match.

It takes a special kind of determination and ability to keep achieving such feats time after time. When asked how he gets the motivation to perform consistently, the all-rounder said that it's the self-belief which changes everything.

"The biggest inspiration is my wife who always inspires me," Shakib told the media after his match-winning effort. "Just a while ago she texted me saying: 'now I can sleep'. Like I said in the presentation ceremony that I thought we didn't have that much of a chance. Then she said, 'I know you can if you can take five wickets Bangladesh can win. I thought about that before going to sleep [the previous night]. I thought if I am able to take five wickets then we have a very good chance and if someone from the other end can take two wickets they will be down by seven or eight wickets. This belief is important and whoever came to the ground today [yesterday] all had the belief that Bangladesh will win. If they have the belief why can't we have that? We could have lost the game by six or seven wickets but it was our intent which was very important."

The No. 1 all-rounder in all three formats felt that they started gaining the belief since beating England at home last year. Bangladesh drew that series against the English 1-1 before going on to draw an away series against Sri Lanka earlier this year.

"Perhaps the biggest change in the current Bangladesh team is the aggressive body language as there were few words exchanged between the players of the two sides here," Shakib said.

Australia captain Steve Smith had exclaimed surprise after some of the Bangladesh players, including Shakib, had claimed that they could win the series 2-0. According to Shakib, after this result, the Aussies will show more respect towards Bangladesh.

"That's [exchange of words and aggression] part of the game which Australians are very good at and we are learning from them... After this Test match they will show a lot more respect. At home, we believe we can beat any side. We had that confidence and the belief came in the last two-three years. Not many have been watching us but we were quietly doing our job," he said.

SHAKIB IN ELITE CLUB		
PLAYER	OPPOSITION	FIGURES
Trevor Bailey (Eng)	West Indies	11/98
Sir Richard Hadlee (NZ)	Sri Lanka	10/102
Harbhajan Singh (Ind)	Sri Lanka	10/141
Muttiah Muralitharan (SL)	Pakistan	10/148
Shakib Al Hasan (BD)	Australia	10/153

Shakib Al Hasan performs a self-invented jig as umpire Aleem Dar (L) rules Mathew Wade (not in the picture) out leg-before on the fourth day of the opening Test at Mirpur yesterday. Shakib's match haul of 10 wickets including a second-innings five-for fashioned Bangladesh's historic 20-run win against Australia. PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

ধুলো ময়লার দ্বন্দ্ব শেষ!

WHAT THEY SAID

"Tamim u brilliant, maybe one off the best openers world has. Taijul great bowling mate, Miraz u rock, Mushy had a little but effective captain's innings, others have supported very well on the field. But one guy who has kept all his answers for this moment.....Shakib u r a living legend, when u fight no one can fight like u. Mate u r born for 22 yards."

–**Mashrafe Bin Mortaza**
Well done Bangladesh. Special effort to beat Australia.

–**Virender Sehawajit**
2 upsets in 2 days! Inspiring performance by @BCBTigers! Test cricket is thriving

–**Sachin Tendulkar**
Well played @BCBTigers on historical test win. Very good test match.

–**Mahela Jayawardene**
Congratulations Bangladesh. Didn't think I would be writing this tweet but you need to give credit where credit is due.

–**Michael Clarke**
Congrats Bangladesh on a special victory. Getting 86/8 when 107 were needed. 2 wonderful test

BD-AUS SCOREBOARD

BANGLADESH: First innings 260
AUSTRALIA: First innings 217
BANGLADESH: Second innings 221 (Tamim 78, Mushfiqur 41, Sabbir 22, Mehedi 26; Lyon 6-82, Agar 2-55)
AUSTRALIA: Second innings R/B 4s/6s (overnight 109 for 2)

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Warner lbw b Shakib	112/135	16/1		
Renshaw lbw b Mehedi	5/20	0/0		
Khawaja c Taijul b Shakib	1/6	0/0		
Smith c Mushfiqur b Shakib	37/99	3/0		
Handscomb c Soumya b Taijul	15/25	2/0		
Maxwell b Shakib	14/25	2/0		
Wade lbw b Shakib	4/13	0/0		
Agar c b Taijul	2/13	0/0		
Cummins not out	33/55	3/2		
Lyon c Soumya b Mehedi	12/24	2/0		
Hazlewood lbw b Taijul	0/10	0/0		
Extras: (b-7, lb-2)		9		
Total: (All out in 70.5 overs)		244		
Fall of wickets: 1-27, 2-28, 3-158, 4-171, 5-187, 6-192, 7-195, 8-199, 9-228, 10-244.				

Result: Bangladesh won by 20 runs and 10 wickets

A big statement: Mushfiqur

SPORTS REPORTER



There was a time when a Test match against Bangladesh was expected to be a one-sided affair and the Tigers had to struggle to adapt to the longest format of the game while facing a lot of criticism from the cricket pundits.

Things have changed over the years and Bangladesh have started to become a new threat in the Test arena since last year's series against England at home.

Yesterday, the Tigers registered their maiden Test win over Australia after some brilliant cricket sealed a scintillating 20-run win, giving the hosts a 1-0 lead in the two match series.

According to Bangladesh Test skipper Mushfiqur Rahim, it is a huge achievement for the Tigers and the win against Australia is a big statement for the cricketing world.

"Obviously, it's a huge achievement and now we can say it's a historic one as you have said before that we are going to play against Australia after 11 years. I think a match itself can't be historic; it's the result that makes it historic."

England were a strong side and Australia may not have a good record in the subcontinent in the recent past, but they did have their best players in the side. I think we fought neck and neck till the fourth day, but I will say they were ahead of us today [yesterday]. Still, we knew the pitch was helping the spinners and apart from the two batsmen [overnight batsmen Steve Smith and David Warner] they didn't have the experience to survive. These wins will help teams like us become confident and in these times experience counts for a lot, so when we will face these situations again we can handle them better. I think it's a big statement," said Mushfiqur after the historic win over Australia in the first Test at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur.

The 30-year-old was of the opinion that the Australians have realised that the Bangladeshi players are also aggressive and revealed that there were some fiery words between the sides, reflecting the confidence of the Bangladesh team.

"They [Australia] had the aggression but at the same time they also realised how aggressive Bangladesh can be, not only while playing but also in our body language. If you have noticed, there were six minutes left before the lunch break when [Glenn] Maxwell tried to waste all the time for an over so that they didn't have to face more than an over. A team like Australia, who always try to dominate the opposition, were not willing to play an extra over before the break. That's a big statement. They even exchanged words with our tailenders and also with the junior players as well as the senior members of our team," he said.

Mushfiqur also praised spinners Taijul Islam and Mehedi Hasan Miraz, but added that they still have a lot to improve and the ability to do better in future.

The peak of an era

BISHWAJIT ROY

It may not be an overstatement if it is said that one can get an insight of Bangladesh's ascendancy in Test cricket if they go look at the two stalwarts -- Shakib Al Hasan and Tamim Iqbal -- development and progress over the past ten years.

It would be unwise to underestimate the efforts of their predecessors as many little things from them paved the way for today's golden generation of Bangladesh cricketers. And the new generation never misses the chance to recall the contributions of their predecessors, with Shakib Al Hasan expressing his gratitude to and admiration for Mohammad Rafique and Abdur Razzak, mentioning the former as his idol.

Still, the fact that the new era of Bangladesh cricket has seen its growth coincide with the development of these two big names in Bangladesh cricket is no coincidence.

"There were good cricketers in our country before them but they are great cricketers. It's not like they began their career with greatness; they improved themselves gradually to take their performance, as well as Bangladesh's performance, to new heights," observed former national captain Habibur Bashar, who saw them at close quarters as a player during their formative years.

Shakib made his debut against India at Chittagong in May 2007 and he had not done anything special, while Tamim Iqbal entered the Test fold in January the next year with some sparkling performances in New Zealand.



Tamim Iqbal gives a big hug to Shakib Al Hasan after their combined efforts in their 50th Test helped Bangladesh secure a fascinating 20-run win against Australia. PHOTO: STAR

feats and these two players have a sense of competitiveness of the highest note, which has only benefited Bangladesh cricket.

"You will get all the stats to know what they have done in the middle so far but the most important thing is that these two players are a class apart because of their ambition to be compared to the best players in the world. Their hunger for success is unmatched and they have developed a professional mindset which separates the current generation of cricketers from previous cricketers," opined Bashar.

The world saw the best advertisement for all those qualities during the first Test against Australia at Mirpur. What Shakib did with bat and ball might have taken the spotlight onto him on the fourth day, but Tamim's pair of great knocks in trying conditions demands the highest attention.

One must accept that the historic win against Australia was the result of the achievements of Bangladesh's two best players'.

Shakib and Tamim complimented each others' efforts. Shakib valued his friend and competitor's knocks highly, while Tamim said: "I was not surprised at all about what Shakib did because I know him. I could only be surprised had it been done by a newcomer."

Yes, there was no point in being surprised by both of these special performances; it just showed how deadly their combined efforts could be for any opponent. They also gave evidence of being at the peak of their powers and will only give more evidence for the historians who will examine the books about the Shakib-Tamim era.

PERFORMER OF THE DAY

SHAKIB AL HASAN



One of the most clichéd statements in cricket is 'form is temporary, but class is permanent'. However clichéd, cricketers, especially in the longest format of the game, often produce performances that justify the use of the statement. Shakib Al Hasan's case could be a prime example of that. The top all-rounder seemed to have gone off the boil a bit in recent times when it came to his bowling. Some even started to say that he had lost venom in his bowling and some even went on to consider him as a third choice in the spin department after the ever-persisting Taijul Islam and the promising Mehedi Hasan. But Shakib, as he usually does, proved everyone wrong with a masterful display of spin bowling to lead Bangladesh to a historic 20-run win over Australia in Dhaka yesterday. While Mehedi and Taijul played supporting roles, Shakib was the man that made the win possible with five wickets in each innings. It could be safely said that his hunger and ability with the ball is still very much on par