

# SPORT

## MOMENTS

### MEHEDI'S WISFUL THINKING

Mehedi Hasan Miraz was expensive in the first Test almost a month ago and bowled 67 wicketless overs, and has not had a place in the eleven since, before yesterday's third ODI at Buffalo Park. So it was no surprise that he was overjoyed when he gave the team their first breakthrough by dismissing Temba Bavuma with the score on 119. His joy only increased when he got the other opener, Quinton de Kock, soon afterwards. But he was pushing it in the 24th over when he appealed loudly for a caught and bowled decision after Markram had clearly jammed a yorker into the ground before it reached Mehedi. No one else was remotely interested, and Mehedi walked back. That was the last joy for Bangladesh for 16 overs.

### CAPTAINS' MISMATCH

The two captains came up against each other during Faf du Plessis and Aiden Markram's 151-run third-wicket stand, and in keeping with everything else on tour, Du Plessis blew his Bangladesh counterpart out of the water. In the 36th over, Mashrafe was bowling off-cutters and concentrating on an outside off stump line, but Du Plessis had the answer. In the second ball, he shuffled across and scooped the ball for a one-bounce four to fine leg, only Mashrafe's lack of pace preventing it from carrying for six. He repeated the same shot the next ball and Mashrafe moved fine leg straighter. But that was of no use as off the last ball, Du Plessis stepped out and hammered the ball for four straight down the ground. Mashrafe 0, Du Plessis 3. Quite apt.

### MARKRAM'S TRAGIC SYMMETRY

Markram is one of the most promising youngsters to have entered the international game, and he proved that with a bright debut earlier during the Test leg of the tour. It could have been brighter because he was run out four short of a hundred in Potchefstroom when it looked for all money that he will get a hundred and much more. Yesterday, he had not scored as much, but on 66 looked a sure bet to reach a debut ODI hundred. But the result was the same, Markram sprawled on the ground, the umpire calling for the replays, and moments later the young man walking back with head bowed.



Bangladesh all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan (L) hit a fighting half-century and formed a 67-run partnership with Sabbir Rahman, but it was not nearly enough to threaten hosts South Africa, who won the third and final ODI by 200 runs at Buffalo Park yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP



## BD-SA SCOREBOARD

SOUTH AFRICA	R/B	4s/6s
Bavuma c Liton b Mehedi	48/47	5/0
De Kock c & b Mehedi	73/68	9/1
Du Plessis retired hurt	91/67	10/1
Markram run out	66/60	4/2
De Villiers c Mashrafe b Rubel	20/15	1/1
Behardien not out	33/24	4/0
Mulder lbw b Taskin	2/4	0/0
Phehlukwayo c Mushfiquir b Taskin	5/4	1/0
Rabada not out	23/11	3/1
Extras: (lb-3, w-5)	8	
Total: (For 6 wickets in 50 overs)	369	
Did not bat: Paterson, Tahir.		
Fall of wickets: 1-119, 2-132, 2-283, 3-289, 4-325, 5-329, 6-335.		

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Mashrafe	9	0	69	0
Mehedi	10	0	59	2
Rubel	10	0	75	1
Shakib	10	0	56	0
Taskin	7	0	66	2
Mahmudullah	3	0	33	0
Sabbir	1	0	8	0

BANGLADESH	R/B	4s/6s
Imrul c Behardien b Paterson	1/6	0/0
Soumya c Markram b Rabada	8/13	1/0
Liton lbw b Paterson	6/6	1/0
Mushfiquir c Rabada b Phehlukwayo	8/21	1/0
Shakib c sub (Duminy) b Markram	63/82	8/0
Mahmudullah lbw b Mulder	2/7	0/0
Sabbir c De Kock b Markram	39/49	6/0
Mehedi c De Villiers b Tahir	15/38	1/0
Mashrafe c De Kock b Paterson	17/17	3/0
Taskin c sub (Duminy) b Tahir	2/6	0/0
Rubel not out	0/0	0/0
Extras: (b-1, lb-1, nb-1, w-5)	8	
Total: (All out in 40.4 overs)	169	
Fall of wickets: 1-3, 2-15, 3-20, 4-51, 5-61, 6-128, 7-135, 8-163, 9-169, 10-169.		

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Rabada	8	1	33	1
Paterson	9	0	44	3
Mulder	8	0	32	1
Phehlukwayo	4	1	13	1
Tahir	8.4	1	27	2
Markram	3	0	18	2

**Result:** South Africa won by 200 runs and clinched 3-match series 3-0.  
**Player-of-the-match:** Faf du Plessis.  
**Player-of-the-series:** Quinton de Kock.

## Festive Buffalo Park

SPORTS REPORTER from East London

If there were any lingering discontent about the fact that Bangladesh's trek across South Africa would not take them across some of the iconic cricket grounds like Centurion, Wanderers or Kingsmead, then that should have been vanished by the stop at Buffalo Park in East London yesterday. On a breezy day, with not a cloud above to dull the luminescence of the African sky, there were many Bangladeshis in attendance -- not as dominating a presence as in Kimberley or Paarl -- but they would not have minded the thrashing meted out to their team too much. The atmosphere was too festive for that. Apart from low, two-storey stands at either end of the ground, a small West Stand square of the wicket on one side and the big scoreboard opposite, the rest is just grass banks, and that is where the fun truly lies. There was a steel band performing through the South Africa innings, and they

had a lot of occasions to get jamming as the Proteas kept finding the ropes and the stands. There was also a makeshift net with a bowling machine, behind which was a screen that showed Dale Steyn running up. When he completed the action the ball shot out through a hole where his hand whips past. Even in virtual reality, he is an intimidating prospect.

The best part however, was a kind of grass hill just to the left of the West Stand, and it must be one of the biggest grass banks around the world, rising a good three-stories above ground level and at the top, you are 60 or 70 yards away from the boundary. From there, you can get a bird's eye view of the proceedings and beyond the ground, to the east, the Indian Ocean.

The string of results on tour so far do not make it seem an injustice anymore that Bangladesh were not given a billing high enough to warrant matches at some of the more renowned grounds, but it does seem an injustice that before yesterday there has been only two matches here for more than five years.



The picturesque Buffalo Park in East London hosted just its third match in over five years yesterday, and the stadium had a very festive vibe with a steel band performing and fans enjoying the atmosphere.

PHOTO: SAKEB SUBHAN

SAKEB SUBHAN from East London

This is his last official press conference on tour, and after a 3-0 thrashing culminating in the 200-run loss in the third ODI at Buffalo Park yesterday, there was not much fight left in skipper Mashrafe Bin Mortaza. There were no positives to look for as a completely limp Bangladesh were bundled out for 169 on a pitch where South Africa had scored 369. Unlike the second ODI, when having fallen 104 short of a 353-run target Mashrafe talked about the possibility of a win if they had gotten centurion AB de Villiers early or if there were more partnerships, yesterday all he seemed to be hoping for was a decent score. "When we saw the pitch yesterday [Saturday] I thought we should

be okay chasing 280 to 300 runs. Our batting today was disappointing," Mashrafe said after the match. "Shakib [Al Hasan] and Sabbir [Rahman] later put together a good stand but those early wickets really made it impossible to raise a decent score.

Much like Test captain Mushfiquir Rahim after the 2-0 loss, there was a frank admission of the team's inadequacies.

"I think we do not have enough confidence to bat and bowl. But that has been happening since the Champions Trophy. Neither the batsmen nor the bowlers took responsibility. I think we have to find out from particular players what's happening. I don't think this can be solved by training a lot in South Africa. It is a long process.

"There have been one or two performances but not a total team

effort. If we can't perform as a team it becomes difficult because as individuals we don't have the ability to turn matches singlehandedly. Maybe that is different at home," said Mashrafe. "It is even harder in these conditions for us to win if a number of our players don't perform together. We were not able to come back, maybe being mentally broken down, we couldn't do as well as we could have.

"This tour has been alarming for Bangladesh cricket and with a World Cup coming up we as a playing unit have to look after these things quickly."

While the batting has been a concern, the bowling seems even more so as Bangladesh have conceded 1,004 runs in the series in 142.5 overs while taking just 12 wickets.

"We were behind them in all aspects of the game. There will be

flat wickets in places like South Africa and New Zealand, so our bowlers have to learn what to bowl here."

For once, the beloved Mashrafe has to take his fair share of the blame. He has not taken a wicket in the series and conceded runs at 7.22 an over, and yesterday he took the inexplicable decision to bowl part-timers -- with five specialists on the park -- after Mehedi Hasan Miraz had dismissed both set openers.

"My plan was to use the spinners to keep the pressure because they were bowling well at that time," Mashrafe said. However, the spinners he used were part-timers Mahmudullah Riyad and Sabbir Rahman, who conceded 41 from four overs to two new batsmen. That kind of formulae thinking hearkens back to the dark days of 2014 -- never a good sign.

## Third game postponed once again

SPORTS REPORTER

Even though the inclement weather subsided and sunshine was beaming down on Cox's Bazar, the third game of a five match one-day series between Bangladesh A and Ireland A was unable to hit the ground yesterday, due to a wet outfield following overnight rain at the Sheikh Kamal International Cricket Stadium.

Earlier the team management, from both sides, arranged a reserve day for the gap in between the third and fourth one-dayer but it seems that the fixture could now be abandoned if the outfield's current situation does not improve.

According to the revised schedule, the remaining three matches will take place on October 24th, 25th and 26th.

Riding on Tanvir Haider's unbeaten fifty in chase of 196 runs, Bangladesh had won the second match of the series by three wickets despite struggling and losing wickets early on while the first fixture was washed out without a single ball bowled.

## Latham, Taylor stun India

AFP, Mumbai



Kane Williamson hailed century-maker Tom Latham and Ross Taylor for inspiring "one of the greatest chases ever" after New Zealand stunned India by six wickets in the first ODI Sunday.

Latham scored 103 and Taylor made 95 as the batsmen put on a massive 200-run partnership to win a thrilling contest at Mumbai's Wankhede Stadium with six balls to spare.

The fourth-wicket partnership, which lasted 187 balls, propelled the Kiwis to 284-4 after home captain Virat Kohli's delightful century saw India record an opening innings total of 280-8.

"It was a brilliant performance from Virat, happening every time he walks out to the crease. But we stuck at it and it was one of the greatest chases I've seen, certainly in my time as a Black Cap," New Zealand captain Williamson said afterwards.

Left-hander Latham's 102-ball knock included eight fours and two sixes. Batting veteran Taylor's 95 came off 99 deliveries and included eight fours.

25-year-old Latham and Taylor, 33, had other ideas and easily batted away everything that India's newest spin attack of Kuldeep Yadav and Yuzvendra Chahal could throw at them.

"I have to go back to that partnership -- Tom and Ross controlled the innings perfectly through the middle overs," beamed Williamson.

Latham, who was named man of the match, said it had been difficult to

keep wicket for 50 overs and then bat for so long in Mumbai's humidity.

"It was tough. The conditions are completely different to back home," he explained, lavishing praise on Taylor for helping him get to his century.

"The biggest thing in a partnership is communication. We were talking every over. Hats off to him for playing such a great innings. He was a calming influence on me," said Latham.

Taylor was dismissed in the penultimate over with New Zealand needing

just one run to win.

"I'll take the win anytime. I think that was one of his (Latham's) best innings ever," Taylor enthused.

**SCORES IN BRIEF:**

**INDIA:** 280 for 8 (Kohli 121, Karthik 37, Kumar 26; Southee 3-73, Boult 4-35)

**NEW ZEALAND:** 284 for 4 in 48 overs (Taylor 95, Latham 103 not out; Bumrah 1-56, Kumar 1-56)

**Result:** New Zealand won by 6 wickets.

**Player-of-the-match:** Tom Latham.



New Zealand batsman Tom Latham hit an unbeaten 103 and shared a 200-run stand with Ross Taylor as the visitors eased to a win in the first ODI against India in Mumbai yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

## PERFORMER OF THE DAY - FAF DU PLESSIS



South Africa skipper Faf du Plessis probably made up his mind on how to compensate for his duck in the previous game beforehand and the stylish batsman did exactly that against Bangladesh during the third and final ODI yesterday. Unluckily the 33-year-old was forced to leave the ground due to an

acute lower-back strain which he sustained while pushing for a second run in the 41st over, just nine runs shy of his ninth ODI hundred. Before that, he reached his fifty off 44 balls and scored the following 41 runs off just 23 balls to help post the highest score ever by any team at the Buffalo Park.