

# SPORT

GoOdness Everyday



Opener Soumya Sarkar finally hit some sort of form in the first T20I against South Africa at Bloemfontein yesterday. His enterprising 47 gave Bangladesh hope of toppling the Proteas' massive 195.

## Where's Chandika?

**SAKEB SUBHAN** from Bloemfontein

Shakib Al Hasan was the third captain to lead a Bangladesh side out onto the field on this ill-fated tour during the first T20I yesterday. Before that, it was Mashrafe Bin Mortaza in the ODI series and Mushfiqur Rahim in the Test series who had to bear the brunt of the backlash for the negative results. While captains have changed with the format, head coach Chandika Hathurusingha has been a constant but since the eve of the first Test against South Africa on September 27, the Sri Lankan's voice has been conspicuous by its absence.

Normally it would not have been an eyebrow-raising issue but in times when the team has been losing and losing badly, it has quickly become the elephant in the press conference room. His absence also raises questions about the differing measures of value the Bangladesh Cricket Board places on the captains and the coach. Mashrafe faced the music six times in three matches, and all except the first time – which was before the start of the series – he had to field questions about the team's failures.

The same went for Mushfiqur – in two Tests, he fronted up five times, with the first day of the second Test being an extra occasion when he came to the end-of-day presser and informed the world that he was instructed to field in the deep by the team management, turning the spotlight on Hathurusingha, who has since just put on high-capacity shades.

Mushfiqur had to bear all of the negativity for the inexplicable decision to win the toss and field first twice, with disastrous results. But it is only natural that the decision was not his alone and one that

other seniors and the coaching staff weighed in on, but it was just Mushfiqur who had to take the responsibility. No wonder then that he said after the second Test was lost that "when the team does really well, all the credit goes to the management and when we are not doing really well, all the blame comes to the captain."

This is not just about satisfying the press hordes' thirst for quotes – failures of the proportions seen on this tour warrants a show of accountability from all the men in charge. And Hathurusingha enjoys a lot of clout when it comes to running the show. He is actually part of the squad selection, a rarity in world cricket, and so it falls upon him to answer why the players chosen cannot deliver or why new faces have not been tried.

As has been mentioned on these pages before, he is also the only one who can satisfactorily answer the question of why, with an extensive coaching staff and a wealth of facilities back home, the batsmen were like deer caught in the headlights even on pitches that were docile by South African standards. He is the one in charge of the practice, and it is obvious that the practice has not produced the desired results even once on a tour that has now crossed a month in duration.

Last but not least, it is hard to escape the feeling that Mashrafe and Mushfiqur have been thrown under the bus after bad results. Both intelligent and thoughtful cricketers, by their third or fourth centuries, they had run out of things to say and were left exposed, sometimes to ridicule. Meanwhile, South Africa coach Ottis Gibson has taken questions twice so far, and if the answer to that is that the hosts have been on a winning trend, it also answers who among the players and coaches the BCB place greater value on.

BD-SA SCOREBOARD										
<b>SOUTH AFRICA</b>					<b>478</b>	<b>46/6</b>				
De Kock, Iqbal, Rabiel					59/44	5/1				
Amila b Mehedi					3/4	0/0				
De Villiers c Mahmudul					49/27	8/0				
b Mehedi					13/10	0/1				
Duminy c Imrul b Shakib					25/19	0/0				
Miller not out					36/17	2/2				
Behardien not out					10	0				
Extras (B-4, lb-1, nb-1, w-4)					18					
Total (For four wickets in 20 overs)					195					
Did not bat: Pheliskwazi, Frylinck, Phungiso, Paterson, Hendricks					118, 29/1, 3/12, 4/133					
<b>BOWLER</b>										
O					M	R	W			
Shakib					3.0	0	28	1		
Mehedi					4.0	0	31	2		
Rabiel					4.0	0	34	1		
Taskin					2.0	0	21	0		
Shafiqul Islam					2.0	0	33	0		
Saifuddin					2.0	0	20	0		
Mahmudul					3.0	23	0	0		
<b>BD-SA</b>					<b>478</b>	<b>46/6</b>				
Imrul b Miller b Hendricks					10/11	1/0				
Soumya Sarkar b Pheliskwazi					47/31	5/2				
Shakib c de Villiers b Frylinck					13/8	3/0				
Mushfiqur c de Villiers					13/8	1/1				
b Phungiso					13/8	1/1				
Sabir c Pheliskwazi					19/16	0/2				
b Hendricks					19/16	0/2				
Mahmudul c Amila					3/4	0/0				
b Pheliskwazi					3/4	0/0				
Saifuddin not out					39/27	3/1				
Mehedi b Paterson					14/8	1/1				
Taskin b b Paterson					0/1	0/0				
Shakib c Miller b Frylinck					1/3	0/0				
Rabiel not out					2/1	0/0				
Extras (lb-1, w-13)					14					
Total (For 9 wickets in 20 overs)					175					
Fall of wickets: 1-43, 2-64, 3-92, 4-96, 5-101, 6-124, 7-147, 8-147, 9-150										
<b>BOWLER</b>										
O					M	R	W			
Paterson					0	0	29	2		
Hendricks					4.0	0	42	2		
Frylinck					4.0	0	33	2		
Pheliskwazi					4.0	0	25	2		
Duminy					1.0	15	0	0		
Phungiso					3.0	30	1	1		
Result: South Africa won by 20 runs										
Player-of-the-match: AB de Villiers										

## Mustafizur to miss BPL again?

SPORTS REPORTER

Mustafizur Rahman is unlikely to feature in the upcoming fifth edition of the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) after the left-arm pacer was diagnosed with a grade-2 strain in his right ankle.

"We checked the MRI today [Thursday] and the report showed a grade-2 strain. This kind of injury takes a long time to heal. He [Mustafizur] started physiotherapy yesterday [Wednesday] and will stay in Dhaka to come in," team physician Dr. Debashish Chowdhury informed yesterday.

When asked whether Mustafizur had any chance of playing the BPL, which will kick off from November 4, Chowdhury said: "We will check his condition after two weeks, so at the moment we cannot say whether he can play the tournament. But as I said this kind of injury takes a long time."

However sources at Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) said that the board would not take any risks before the important home series against Sri Lanka, who will arrive in Dhaka sometime in the second week of January to play two Tests and as many T20Is. Besides that there is also a proposed tri-nation ODI tournament which the BCB is negotiating with their Zimbabwean counterparts.



Sources at Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) said that the board would not take any risks before the important home series against Sri Lanka, who will arrive in Dhaka sometime in the second week of January to play two Tests and as many T20Is. Besides that there is also a proposed tri-nation ODI tournament which the BCB is negotiating with their Zimbabwean counterparts.

Rajshahi Kings picked Mustafizur during the BPL players' draft in September 16. Mustafizur had twisted his ankle while reportedly playing football ahead of a training session in South Africa which ruled him out of the three-match ODI and two-match T20I series and forced him to return home early. The left-arm was one of the bright

spots in an otherwise abysmal bowling performance in the two-match Test series. In the third edition of the BPL Mustafizur played for Dhaka Dynamites and scalped 14 wickets at an average of 15.28 over 10 matches. However, he had to sit out the fourth edition last year due to a shoulder injury.

## Bangladesh A complete Ireland whitewash

SPORTS REPORTER

Yasir Ali hit a fine unbeaten hundred as Bangladesh A completed a whitewash of the visiting Ireland A team with a 76-run victory in the last one-day match at the Sheikh Kamal International Cricket Stadium in Cox's Bazar yesterday.

The 21-year old right-hander from Chittagong smote eight fours and five sixes during his 101-ball hit as the home side reached 286 for six in their share of 50 overs.

Opener Anamul Haque once again failed to make any impact as the right-hander was dismissed for just 13 runs while captain Nazmul Hossain walked back to the pavilion for 26, reducing Bangladesh to 57 for 2.

Yasir then joined opener Shadman Islam and the duo snatched the initiative from the visitors with a 132-run stand. Shadman scored 68 off 103 balls, smashing four boundaries and a six. After his departure, Al Amin (20) and Tanvir Hayder (26) ably supported Yasir as the hosts put up a challenging total.

In reply, Ireland A made a poor start as Ali Nam dismissed Sean Terry for 3 and Sunzamul removed Andrew Balmain for 4. Jack Tector and John Anderson steadied the ship with an 83-run third-wicket partnership before Enam dismissed Tector for 66. Abu Hider then picked up three wickets in quick succession to confirm an easy win.

Sunzamul, Tanvir and Mehedi Hasan contributed to

cutting the Ireland tail as the visitors were bundled out for 210 in 43.4 overs.

The first one-day was abandoned due to rain but Bangladesh A won the other three comfortably and also clinched the only T20 match.

SCORES IN BRIEF									
<b>IRLAND A</b>									
286 for 6 (Yasir 102 not out, Sadman 68; McCarthy 2-45, Getkate 2-63)									
<b>IRELAND A</b>									
210 all out in 43.4 overs (Tector 66, Anderson 45; Haider 3-38, Sunzamul 2-28, Enam 2-46)									
Result: Bangladesh A won by 76 runs and clinched the series 3-0.									
Player-of-the-match: Yasir Ali.									
Player-of-the-series: Tanvir Haider.									



Yasir Ali's unbeaten century powered Bangladesh A to a 76-run victory in the last one-day against Ireland A at the Sheikh Kamal International Cricket Stadium in Cox's Bazar yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR FILE

## PERFORMER OF THE DAY

**Soumya Sarkar**

Soumya Sarkar has not been in any sort of form for quite some time. He had a forgettable Test series in South Africa. His one-day form has also dipped. The young right-hander even looked like a fish out of water while fielding in the deep during the first T20I at Bloemfontein yesterday. But Soumya finally got some sort of his rhythm

back with the bat. Opening the innings, he scored a fine 47 off 31 balls. His knock that contained five sweetly timed fours and two sixes gave Bangladesh hope of toppling the home side's huge 195. But Bangladesh fell apart after his departure and eventually finished on 175-9. It is always refreshing to see him batting.

## THE SHAFIUL-TASKIN CONNECTION

The tour could not have gotten much worse for Shafiqul Islam and Taskin Ahmed. Along with Nasir Hossain, they had broken team curfew on the night the 3-0 ODI whitewash was cemented by South Africa, creating further turmoil within the team. Shafiqul had not played a match since the first Test, and finally having gotten a look-in for yesterday's first T20I, the formidable task of bowling his first over, the sixth of the innings, to an ominous-looking AB de Villiers took a turn for the comically ironic. De Villiers pulled Shafiqul's fourth ball towards short fine-leg, and who but Taskin there fell over the ball and conceded a boundary.

## MOMENTS

**SAKEB SUBHAN** from Bloemfontein

The thing he did not get much better for the duo as Shafiqul conceded 33 off his two overs and Taskin 21 off two.

**IMRUL'S BLINDER**

There has not been much to celebrate for Bangladesh on this tour so when they got De Villiers out without the maestro having done irreparable damage it was important that they held on to that momentum. Imrul Kayes did just that when South Africa skipper stepped out to hit composite number Shakib Al Hasan out of the ground in the 13th over. The ball went like Ravi Shastri's famed 'tracer bullet' high and to the left of Imrul at long off, and he ran full tilt at the speeding ball and leapt to get a hand to it. He got enough of a hand to it

for the ball to lob up and away from him, but he kept on running and put in a dive at full stretch to turn what would have been a good catch into a brilliant one.

**SOUMYA'S REMINDER**

Soumya Sarkar has been the object of much derision during this tour, much of which he has spent out of the team and when he did play, he got out edging early. But yesterday, as early as the second over of the chase, he showed just why he is rated highly by the team. With the most nonchalant of flicks, he deposited Beuran Hendricks over wide long and into the crowd. Five fours and a further six followed, and although Bangladesh lost, Soumya can rest assured that for once, he has proven a point.

**Playing int'l cricket is a dream: Ball**

AGENCIES, London

England seamer Jake Ball says that playing international cricket is a dream come true for him despite enduring a rollercoaster start to his time at the highest level.

Ball is part of the England Ashes squad and feels that his team have every chance of retaining the urn down under.

Ball told the 'It's starting to feel a bit more normal that I'll be going to the Ashes. I had a bit of a break at the end of the season and got away from cricket a bit.

"Getting all my kit and packing it all makes it feel more real."