



New Zealand players sniffed a win after Pakistan top-order batsman Imamul Haq's dismissal left the hosts on 55 for five in chase of 280 on the final day of the third and final Test in Abu Dhabi yesterday. The Kiwis went on to record their first away win against Pakistan in 49 years.

PHOTO: AFP

Kiwis' first in 49 years

AFP, Abu Dhabi



Debutant Will Somerville grabbed three key wickets to guide New Zealand to their first away series win over Pakistan in 49 years with a crushing 123-run win in the third and final Test on Friday.

The off-spinner took 3-52 and was aided by fellow spinner Ajaz Patel's 3-42 as Pakistan came up well short after being set a daunting 280-run target in 79 overs.

They crumbled to 156 in 56.1 overs on a weary pitch at Sheikh Zayed Stadium in Abu Dhabi.

The victory gave New Zealand a 2-1 series win after they had taken the first Test by a narrow four-run margin at the same venue. Pakistan bounced back with an innings and 16-run win in the second Test in Dubai.

New Zealand's last away series win against Pakistan was a 1-0 victory in matches played in Pakistan in 1969.

Captain Kane Williamson, whose 139-run innings turned the match and the series in his side's favour, said: "It was fantastic. Beating Pakistan in their backyard is very tough. It feels pretty special, and this will be one that the guys remember for a long time.

"We know the game can ebb and flow very quickly but we came out and played very well today."

Tri-series in Ireland in May?

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh will play an ODI series in Ireland against the West Indies and the hosts, ahead of the ICC 2019 World Cup in England which will begin on May 30.

According to ESPNcricinfo, the tournament will take place from May 5 next year. The teams will face each other twice, with the final to be held on May 17.

"We were scheduled to play a series in Ireland next year and the matter is under discussion. However, as the home nation's cricket board normally confirms the participants of a tournament, we can't make any comment on this," Bangladesh Cricket Board's media committee chairman Jalal Yunus told The Daily Star yesterday.

Bangladesh are scheduled to tour New Zealand in February next year where the visitors will play three ODIs and a three-match Test series.



Pakistan all-rounder Mohammad Hafeez was accorded a guard of honour as he strode out on the final day of his final Test yesterday.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Somerville, who took 4-75 in the first innings to finish with seven wickets in the match, broke a stubborn 43-run sixth-wicket stand between top scorer Babar Azam (51) and skipper Sarfraz Ahmed, who made 28.

Patel ended Azam's 114-ball resistance before getting the last wicket when he dismissed Hasan Ali for four, sparking celebrations among the New Zealand players.

Earlier, New Zealand declared their second innings on 353-7 after some 45 minutes of batting with Henry Nicholls remaining unbeaten on 126 and Williamson dismissed at his overnight score of 139.

SCORES IN BRIEF

NEW ZEALAND: First innings 274 & second innings 353 for 7 declared (Williamson 139, Nicholls 126 not out Grandhomme 26; Yasir 4-129, Afridi 2-85)

PAKISTAN: First innings 348 & second innings 156 (Azam 51, Sarfraz 28, Imam 22; Southee 3-42, Patel 3-42, Somerville 3-52)

Result: New Zealand won by 123 runs
Player-of-the-match: Kane Williamson

Official ensures last-over maiden

MAZHAR UDDIN



Just before the final over of a first division cricket league match between Old DOHS Sports Club and Agrani Bank Cricket Club yesterday, the match was stopped for over 10 minutes while an official of the batting team called the batsman on strike to the boundary for a long chat. That was followed by the batsman -- Tauhid Tarek on 53 off 52 balls -- returning to the umpire to tell him that he was unwell and could not continue. With four runs to win from six balls, the next batsman came in and played out six dot balls.

It was learnt that Agrani Bank officials had asked Tarek not to go for the win and, when he was unwilling to follow that directive, asked him to leave the ground. Shahidul Islam was the batsman who played out a maiden over as Agrani Bank eventually lost the game by three runs.

This shocking incident at the Khan Shaheb Osman Ali Stadium in Fatullah took place in the crucial super league stage of what is supposed to be the country's second-most professionally run domestic league.

If one argues that the last-over maiden was bowled by a genius against whom it was impossible to score, consider that when Agrani Bank required 34 off the last three overs, Tarek and Fazle took six runs in the 48th over and smashed 24 in the 49th to all but clinch the match.

Old DOHS had already confirmed the cham-

Table with 4 columns: Player, Runs, Wickets, and Overs. It lists the performance of various players in the match between Agrani Bank CC and Old DOHS SC.

Unfortunately the scorecard from the match between Agrani Bank CC and Old DOHS SC is barely legible, but the key portion is highlighted here.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

pionship before the game with 27 points and eventually ended up at the top of the table with 29 points after the win and are set to be promoted to the Dhaka Premier League next season.

Agrani Bank, on 21 points, required a win against Old DOHS in the last game to become runners-up and also be promoted in the Premier League. But after the defeat the winner of the last game between Partex Sporting Club

and Rugganj Tigers Club will instead be runners-up and gain promotion.

On 21 points, Partex will face Rugganj (19 points) and if the latter manage to beat Partex in the last game today they will also attain 21 points. Rugganj, however, will be promoted through the head to head equation.

According to a witness present at the ground who talked to The Daily Star, Agrani Bank officials had told the batsman that if he does not lose this game the top authorities will make sure that the team would be demoted to second division next season.

The Agrani Bank team manager Nazrul

Table with 4 columns: Player, Runs, Wickets, and Overs. It lists the performance of various players in the match between Agrani Bank CC and Old DOHS SC.

Islam, who answered his cell phone after sever attempts were made to contact him, said that he was not aware of the events as he was not present at the ground yesterday.

This one is just the latest in a long list of incidents in the first, second and third division leagues and despite headlines, the brazenness of officials trying to fix entire tournaments seem unaffected.

Pothas wants Tigers' consistency

SPORTS REPORTER



There has been no honeymoon period to speak of for West Indies interim head coach Nic Pothas as the once-mighty Caribbean team lurch from one embarrassment to another. Pothas, a former South African player, was elevated to his current role from his previous one as fielding coach in the aftermath of Stuart Law quitting in late September. In his first assignment in charge, he has seen the team lose the Test series in Bangladesh in abject fashion.

Ahead of tomorrow's first ODI against Bangladesh in Mirpur, Pothas paid the opposition a compliment by saying that he wanted the Tigers' consistency in selection to lift the team out of the mire.

"I think Bangladesh have a very

strong competition to be here, which is great grounding for players coming through. And the Bangladesh team has been very consistent," Pothas told reporters during an optional training session at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium yesterday. "When I say consistent, the players they choose, there is not a lot of change in the team so they know their roles very well. And that's what we are looking for -- we are looking to try and get a team that is pretty similar every time we put a team on the park, so that once you give a player a role he understands that well."

While West Indies are looking for continuity to achieve greater role definition, Bangladesh seemed to be mulling a happier predicament after the BCB XI rode on centuries from Soumya Sarkar and Tamim Iqbal to beat West Indies in the warm-up match at BKSP on

Thursday. One of Bangladesh's few weak points in ODI cricket is the lack of a stable opening partner for Tamim, but the recent successes of Soumya, Liton Das and Imrul Kayes have given them a wealth of options.

"It is going to be tough decisions for the Bangladesh team management [to pick the openers], but what a wonderful position to be in," head coach Steve Rhodes, who made the trek to Savar to view his options, said after the practice game. "We are desperate for some depth of cricketers in Bangladesh and we are now showing that we have quite a few. Imrul got 349 runs against Zimbabwe and Tamim has come back to form. Liton Das got an 80-odd against Zimbabwe and not too long back, a hundred in the Asia Cup final. Soumya has got a hundred at No 3 and a hundred today.

Bangladesh bounce back

SPORTS REPORTER

Riding on Mosaddek Hossain's century, the Bangladesh Under-23 team bounced back from their humiliating opening match defeat to the UAE with a 28-run win against Hong Kong at the Southend Club Cricket Stadium in Karachi yesterday.

After winning the toss and electing to bat, Bangladesh put on 286 for eight with 22-year-old Mosaddek, who was out for a duck in the last match, hitting an 86-ball 100 with eight fours and three sixes.

Hong Kong looked to be making some headway in their chase after a 101-run stand between opener Nizakat Khan and Babar Hayat took them to 177 for three inside 36 overs before the former was bowled by Nayeem Hasan's off-spin for a 95-ball 92.

Hayat went for a slog in the penultimate over that resulted in him being caught for a measured 95-ball 91.

Bangladesh will take on Pakistan in their final group game on Sunday, a must-win encounter.

SCORES IN BRIEF
BANGLADESH: 286 for 8 (Zakir 49, Nazmul Hossain 36, Mosaddek 100, Yasir 45; Aizaz 3-62, Nawaz 2-48)
HONG KONG: 258 for 7 (Nizakat 92, Hayat 91; Khaled 2-69, Mosaddek 2-23)
Result: Bangladesh won by 28 runs.



TENNIS GOING TO THE DOGS

A tennis event taking place from December 6-9 at the Royal Albert Hall in London organised by charity Canine Parnters had a bunch of adorable dogs to fetch stray balls. And yes, when they came out to the court, the song playing was "Who Let The Dogs Out".

PHOTO: REUTERS



India captain Virat Kohli had plenty to cheer for on the second day of the first Test at Adelaide yesterday against Australia as the hosts were reduced to 191-7.

Cool Head steers Oz

AFP, Adelaide



Travis Head hit a stubborn half-century to keep Australia in the hunt Friday after their top order slumped under sustained pressure from India's bowlers, leaving the first Test in Adelaide finely poised.

Batting on his home ground, Head kept his cool in the humid conditions to be 61 not out at stumps on day two, with Mitchell Starc unbeaten on eight.

His efforts helped steer Australia to 191-7 in reply to India's 250.

Off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin bowled beautifully to take three wickets, while Ishant Sharma and Jasprit Bumrah grabbed two each.

It was Head's second 50 in his third Test, with the Adelaide-born 24-year-old playing the sort of gutsy innings that his more experienced teammates couldn't match.

All of Australia's top four were back without passing 30, with Aaron Finch (0) and Shaun Marsh (2) notable failures.

It once again reinforced how much Australia are missing Steve Smith and David Warner, who remain banned over their part in the South Africa ball-tampering affair.

SCORES IN BRIEF

INDIA: First innings 250 (Pujara 123, Sharma 37; Hazlewood 3-52, Cummins 2-49, Starc 2-63, Lyon 2-83)

AUSTRALIA: First innings 191 for 7 (Head 61 not out, Handscomb 34; Ashwin 3-50, Sharma 2-31, Bumrah 2-34)