

SPORT



Bangladesh T20I captain Shakib Al Hasan is a portrait of dejection after the West Indies centered to an eight-wicket win in the first T20I in Sylhet yesterday. The skipper played a lone hand, hitting a 43-ball 61, but the visitors' big hitting saw them power home with 55 balls to spare. PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Overconfidence and lessons not learned

SAKEB SUBHAN from Sylhet

Bangladesh were thoroughly outgunned by T20 world champions West Indies in the first T20I yesterday at the Sylhet International Stadium and that the visitors chased Bangladesh's total of 129 all out with 55 balls and eight wickets to spare showed the extent to which the hosts were dominated.

It was a case of one team excelling at both batting and bowling while the other underperformed in both departments. On a good wicket where the ball came on to the bat, Bangladesh were unable or unwilling to adjust game plans when their best batsman, Tamim Iqbal, was out early off Sheldon Cottrell trying to force a flat-batted shot down the ground when he would have been better served using the pace of the wicket against the fast men.

Only skipper Shakib Al Hasan, whose strength is hitting shots square of the wicket, managed to bat with ease with a 43-ball 61. While Tamim made an error in judgement and shot selection, batting coach Neil McKenzie said he was disappointed that the others did not learn from that error as Soumya Sarkar and Liton Das departed in the same manner in the first six overs that yielded four wickets.

"I don't think we learned quick enough. There was extra pace with Cottrell and [Oshane] Thomas opening the innings. We knew they were going to hit the deck hard," the batting coach said after the match. "Shakib showed that we could have used the pace a little bit more. I think we just tried to be too aggressive, trying to hit the ball in front of square when we could have used the

pace. You have to hit the ball against guys who have slower balls and change-ups, but when they bowl 138-140s, you have to be a little bit smarter."

McKenzie thought that after the recent 2-0 and 2-1 wins over the same opposition in Tests and ODIs, a bit of overconfidence may have crept in.

"The team has been on a high in terms of how many series they have won. So the confidence level is there. It is disappointing that they didn't learn from each other, but we trust our batsmen.

"I get worried when I see guys getting gloved or moving away to leg or get beaten for pace around your nose," he said when asked if the Tigers have a problem against pace. "Today it was more about a bit of overconfidence. You have Liton coming down the track at a guy bowling 140. Tamim has been in great form. He is trying to hit it way in front of square. Soumya also tried to do the same thing. Looking to stay on top of the ball, trying to hit it the square-leg umpire and behind, using the pace, was a better shot on that surface. I think it was overconfidence, trying to fight fire with fire. Sometimes you have to deflect more than attack."

Shakib was not as forgiving during the presentation ceremony. "Everything went wrong today other than the toss. We didn't bat well and didn't bowl well. It was a good surface, we should've scored at least 175. You must ask the other batsmen why they didn't bat well. I can't answer for everyone."

With the captain suitably miffed, one can expect a change of attitude, or at least a change in the nature of wickets for the next two matches in Mirpur. Given the difference in T20 pedigree, the latter may have a better chance at bringing results.

'Whatever we do, we do it hard'

SPORTS REPORTER from Sylhet

West Indies proved yesterday just why they are a feared side in T20I cricket. They are not the best T20I side in the world by any means, as their ranking of seventh shows, but on their day the World Twenty20 champions are unstoppable.

Yesterday at the Sylhet International Stadium was one such day and what came through both in left-arm pacer Sheldon Cottrell's four wickets for 28 runs and Shai Hope's 16-ball 50 was the clarity of thought and the unadulterated aggression they employ in the narrow scope of the game's shortest format.

The game was played on a fast wicket that suited their fast bowlers and hard-hitting batsmen, but it is instructive that player-of-the-match Cottrell implied that he barely noticed the wicket.

"I won't say happy," he replied when asked whether they were happier with this kind of wicket after they lost the Test and ODI series on slow and low surfaces. "I don't know if it was slow or fast or bouncy or whatever. We just played cricket on the day. We decided to just come out and play hard cricket. Whatever we do we do it hard. That's just it."

They first bowled out Bangladesh for 129 in 19 overs, and Cottrell did the initial damage by getting rid of Tamim Iqbal and Soumya Sarkar, both of whom fell trying to flat-bat short deliveries straight over the infield. Much like his answer to the question about the pitch, Cottrell said that there was no definite plan to target Bangladesh batsmen with short deliveries, but just to go out

there with an aggressive mindset. "Our plan in this game was to just bowl aggressive in whatever we do, whether bowling yorkers, length balls, short balls. Just to bowl aggressive, and it paid off."

Hope had played innings of very different character in the ODIs, during which he hit two back-to-back unbeaten tons, but Cottrell was not surprised.

"It wasn't surprising at all. He has been in form for a while now; he's currently eighth in the ODI rankings as a batsman. I mean once

I am a soldier in the Jamaican defence force, so it's a way of showing my appreciation to my co-workers. I know I am on international duty, so it's a way of showing appreciation.

PLAYER-OF-THE-MATCH SHELDON COTTRELL OF WEST INDIES EXPLAINS HIS SPECIAL CELEBRATION AFTER TAKING A WICKET

you are in form as a batsman you have to cash in, and he showed a perfect example of that."

West Indies are at the end of a journey across the subcontinent, playing a full tour of India before coming to Bangladesh. When asked how the result in the previous series in Bangladesh and the one yesterday were so different, the Jamaican cast his eyes homeward.

"As I said it's a different format and most of the guys are looking forward to going home," Cottrell said with a smile. "It's closer to home and so we play our best cricket now. We just came together, it was just cricket on the day for me."

BD-WI SCOREBOARD

BANGLADESH	R/B	4s/6s
Tamim c Brathwaite b Cottrell	5/7	0/0
Liton c Brathwaite b Thomas	6/5	1/0
Soumya c Powell b Cottrell	5/4	1/0
Shakib c & b Cottrell	61/43	8/2
Mushfiqur run out	5/3	1/0
Mahmudullah c Hope		
b Cottrell	12/19	1/0
Arifur c Pooran b Allen	17/18	2/0
Saifuddin c Pooran		
b Brathwaite	1/2	0/0
Mehedi c Hope b Paul	8/10	1/0
Hider not out	1/2	0/0
Mustafizur b Paul	0/2	0/0
Extras: (b-4, lb-2, nb-1, w-1)	8	
Total: (All out in 19 overs)	129	
Fall of wickets: 1-11, 2-19, 3-31, 4-48, 5-73, 6-103, 7-110, 8-122, 9-129, 10-129.		

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Thomas	4	0	33	1
Cottrell	4	0	28	4
Paul	4	0	23	2
Brathwaite	3	0	13	1
Allen	3	0	19	1
Powell	1	0	7	0

WEST INDIES	R/B	4s/6s
Lewis c Arifur b Saifuddin	18/11	1/1
Hope c Mustafizur		
b Mahmudullah	55/23	3/6
Pooran not out	23/17	3/0
Paul not out	28/14	1/3
Extras: (lb-5, w-1)	6	
Total: (For 2 wickets in 10.5 overs) 130		

Did not bat: Hetmyer, Bravo, Powell, Brathwaite, Allen, Cottrell, Thomas.

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Shakib	3.5	0	32	0
Mehedi	2	0	37	0
Hider	1	0	15	0
Saifuddin	1	0	13	1
Mustafizur	1	0	15	0
Mahmudullah	2	0	13	1

Result: West Indies won by 8 wickets.

Player-of-the-match: Sheldon Cottrell.

PERFORMER OF THE DAY



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HURRICANE HOPE

West Indies opener Shai Hope continued his fantastic run from the ODI series to the first of a three-match T20I series against hosts Bangladesh to help the visitors win the encounter comprehensively by eight wickets yesterday. After striking consecutive hundreds in the ODIs, the right-hander smashed the third fastest T20I fifty ever off 16 deliveries, just behind Yuvraj Singh (12 balls) and Colin Munro (14 balls). Hope struck three fours and six sixes yesterday, five of which came against Mehedi Hasan Miraz who conceded 23 runs in the second over of the innings.

Australia five wickets away

AFP, Perth

Australia are poised for their first Test win since the ball-tampering scandal after spinner Nathan Lyon claimed the prized wicket of Indian captain Virat Kohli in the second Test in Perth on Monday.

Set 287 to win on an unpredictable pitch, India were reduced to 112 for five at stumps on the fourth day.

Hanuma Vihari was 24 not out and Rishabh Pant was on nine.

The visitors still needed 175 to win with just five wickets in hand as Australia seek to level the four-Test series and claim their first Test win since beating South Africa at St George's Park in March.

Australian paceman Josh Hazlewood said the home team were excited by the chance of an overdue victory on the fifth day.

India lead 1-0 after victory in Adelaide, but have never won a Test series in Australia. The loss of Kohli appeared a fatal blow to their chances of a famous win.



Australia spinner Nathan Lyon scalped two crucial wickets, undoing the good work (INSET) India pacer Mohammad Shami had done with his six-for. PHOTO: AFP

time in Test cricket, two more than any other bowler, when he had him caught at slip by Usman Khawaja for 17.

His departure was the cause of great delight for Australian captain Tim Paine,

after the pair had exchanged words at the conclusion of the third day.

The Australian wicketkeeper, looking for his first win as skipper in five Tests since taking over from the disgraced Steve Smith,

celebrated the dismissal with a cheeky comment to not out batsman Murali Vijay.

"Murali, I know he's your captain, but you can't seriously like him as a bloke," Paine said, in comments picked up by microphone.

Just two overs later Vijay was also on his way back to the pavilion, bowled off an inside edge by Lyon, who took two for 30.

The pair of wickets continued a fine match for Lyon, who picked up five in the Indian first innings to move into the top 25 all-time Test wicket-takers, currently on 333.

After Australia lost their last six wickets for 51 runs to be dismissed for 243, with Mohammed Shami claiming a career-best 6-56, India made a disastrous start to their run chase just before tea.

SCORES IN BRIEF AUSTRALIA: First innings 326

INDIA: First innings 283

AUSTRALIA: Second innings 243 all out (Harris 20, Finch 25 rtd hurt, Khawaja 72, Paine 37; Bumrah 3-39, Shami 6-56)

INDIA: Second innings 112 for 5 (Vijay 20, Rahane 30, Kohli 17, Vihari 24 not out; Hazlewood 2-24, Lyon 2-30)

Fifth round begins today

SPORTS REPORTER

The fifth round of the ongoing Bangladesh Cricket League gets underway today at two different venues -- the Shaheed Kamruzzaman Stadium in Rajshahi and the Shaheed Chandu Stadium in Bogura.

Defending champions South Zone will lock horns with East Zone in Bogura, a venue which has seen pacers exploit the green-top, while North Zone takes on Central Zone in Rajshahi.

It has been an eventful show of cricket so far even though only two matches of the eight played across the previous four rounds witnessed two different winners -- South and Central -- while the other two teams, East and North are yet to register a win as the other six matches ended in draws. With another round to be played, the title race is still on considering the point difference between the teams.

TEAM	M	W	L	D	Pts
Central Zone	4	1	1	2	17.93
South Zone	4	1	1	2	17.63
East Zone	4	0	0	4	14.77
North Zone	4	0	0	4	14.18