



## Adjustment key for Tigers

Second ODI against New Zealand tomorrow

SPORTS REPORTER from Napier

Coming from 26-degree Celsius temperature in Napier, where Bangladesh lost the first of three ODIs comprehensively by eight wickets, the challenge to adapt to testing New Zealand conditions continued for the Tigers as the visitors reached Christchurch for the second ODI yesterday.

The match will begin at 4:00 am (Bangladesh time) on Saturday.

It was quite chilly in Christchurch, compared to Napier, with the mercury nearing 16 degrees along with heavy wind and, to make things more unbearable, it was also raining every now and then yesterday.

The cricketers spent a rest day yesterday since arriving in Christchurch and the morale of the side is still high despite the comprehensive defeat as the players looked in relaxed mood.

It will be a huge task for visitors to acclimatise with the unpredictable Christchurch weather as there is rain forecast for tomorrow's second ODI, which Bangladesh will have to win at the Hagley Oval to stay alive in the three-match series.

Coming back to the skill, one of the major concerns for Bangladesh will be the batting department, with the Tigers at one stage struggling on 131 for seven inside 29 overs in Napier. But Mohammad Mithun and Mohammad Saifuddin added Bangladesh's record 84-run eighth-wicket stand to help post 232 before being



With the second ODI against New Zealand set to take place in Cristchurch tomorrow, the arduous journey from Napier seems to have taken a toll on the Tigers as opener Tamim Iqbal (L) and ODI captain Mashrafe Bin Mortaza (C) were visibly weary yesterday. On the other hand, Mohammad Mithun (R) should be in high spirits as he top scored for Bangladesh in the first ODI.



PHOTO: MAZHAR UDDIN

bundled out with seven balls to spare.

More importantly it's the Tigers' top order with the likes of Tamim Iqbal, Liton Das, Soumya Sarkar and Mushfiqur Rahim, who struggled against the initial swing and movement from Kiwi pacers Trent Boult, Matt Henry and Lockie Ferguson.

The Tigers, however will get one more day to work on their mistakes as they are scheduled to practise today, ahead of the second

ODI.

Mashrafe did mention after defeat in the first game that it's the batsmen who need to put up a decent total in order to give the bowlers something to fight with and the focus will be on providing a solid start at the top.

Another area that went unnoticed in the Tigers' defeat was the need to improve ground fielding and catching with Bangladesh fielders being far outperformed by the Kiwis.

There were quite a few fielding errors that helped the New Zealand batsmen to get settled despite the bowlers providing a tight start while defending a modest total.

New Zealand, on the other hand, will be looking to continue their dominance with comeback hero and the centurion in the first game Martin Guptill and Henry Nicholls -- who scored a fifty -- after the pair added a 103-run opening stand for the hosts.

The Kiwi fast bowlers will once again test the Tigers' batsman with sheer pace and swing as the fast bowlers accounted for seven Bangladesh wickets in the first game.

Bangladesh has never won in New Zealand at any format of the game yet and to change that the visitors needs to pull up their socks in every department to re-write the history ahead of the upcoming ICC World Cup campaign later this year in England.

## 'I felt what actual pace is'

MAZHAR UDDIN from Napier

It was the first time experiencing New Zealand for Bangladesh players Liton Das, Mohammad Saifuddin and Mohammad Mithun when they played the first ODI on Wednesday. And although the visitors lost the game by a comprehensive eight wickets, Saifuddin and Mithun had relatively good outings in their maiden appearance in the testing conditions.

On the other hand, Liton would want to forget his first game in New Zealand as he was bowled by Matt Henry after scoring just one run as Bangladesh suffered a batting collapse that left them struggling on 131 for seven. However, Mithun and Saifuddin steadied the ship and added a Bangladesh record eighth-wicket 84-run stand to take the total to 232.

Mithun top-scored for the Tigers with 62 off 90 balls while Saifuddin provided valuable support with a 58-ball 41.

However, Mithun admitted to The Daily Star outside the Novotel Hotel in Christchurch, where the Bangladesh team are staying, that he never faced bowlers as quick as the likes of Trent Boult and Matt Henry.

"This is my first time in New Zealand and although I have faced Jofra Archer, who bowls very quick, that was in Bangladesh and in a T20 game. When I faced Boult and Henry, I felt what actual real pace is and how conditions can help seamers," Mithun said. "What you face in the match is totally different to what you practise [against] in the nets so it was something new for me as I am not used to playing against such fast bowlers."

"I never felt at ease for even a while when I was batting. It would be a lie if I said I felt at ease batting against such a bowling attack. I had to work really hard and whoever wants to score runs will have to work hard in such conditions," he added.

The 22-year-old Saifuddin was courageous and the all-rounder believes that he is confident of delivering his best.

"When I went out to bat and was about to face the first ball -- that too against Boult, who I admire for his express bowling -- I decided not to show that I was nervous. So I came down the track to hit Boult off the very first ball and he came towards me and said 'are you crazy?' and smiled. Since then I started gaining confidence and tried to play for my team and never thought of reaching a fifty, which I could have scored if I wanted," said Saifuddin.

However, the right-arm pacer admitted that he was not happy with his bowling and that he would try to utilise the seam-friendly conditions to greater effect in the coming days.

## Bashundhara scrape past Rahmatganj



Bashundhara Kings' Kyrgyz forward Bakhtiyar Duyshobekov (C) aims at goal during their Bangladesh Premier League match against Rahmatganj MFS at the Sheikh Kamal Stadium in Nilphamari yesterday.

PHOTO: BFF

SPORTS REPORTER

Bashundhara Kings moved back to the top of the Bangladesh Premier League table, retaining their hundred per cent record so far, following a 1-0 victory over Rahmatganj MFS at the Sheikh Kamal Stadium in Nilphamari yesterday.

Kyrgyz forward Bakhtiyar Duyshobekov scored the only goal of the game from the spot five minutes into the second half after his Brazilian teammate Marcos Vinicius was adjudged to have been fouled inside the box by Rahmatganj centre-back and captain Monday Osagie.

The referee did not hesitate in pointing to the spot despite heavy protestation from the Rahmatganj skipper. It did look like the Nigerian got a touch on the ball while trying to clear it from Vinicius, who had hared into the box on a throughball from Alamgir Kabir Rana.

The Kyrgyz forward, though, calmly dispatched the spot-kick to the top left corner of the net, picking up his first goal of the campaign.

Although Bashundhara Kings were not as

impressive as they have been in this campaign -- they scored nine goals and conceded just once in their past four games -- they did make an impression in front of goal, with Vinicius and Daniel Colindres in the thick of things.

Bashundhara should have got a second in added time of the second half when Rahmatganj defender Damien Udeh failed to clear Vinicius's shot, allowing Colindres to poke home. However, the linesman raised the flag even though Colindres was clearly in an outside position.

The win took Bashundhara to 15 points from five matches, equal with defending champions Abahani, who have played a match

more. Rahmatganj, on the other hand, remain on three points from six matches.

Meanwhile, NoFeL Sporting Club, after having lost their first three matches, have now got two points from two matches, thanks to a 0-0 draw against Team BJMC at the Shaheed Bulu Stadium in Noakhali yesterday. The draw took both sides to two points and they remain bottom of the table even though NoFeL SC have played five matches to Team BJMC's six.

<b>BASHUNDHARA</b>	<b>1 - 0</b>	<b>RAHMATGANJ</b>
DUYSHOBEKOV 50'		
<b>NOFEL SC</b>	<b>0 - 0</b>	<b>TEAM BJMC</b>

## Young Tigers seek to seal domination

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Under-19s will be looking to tie the bow on a series of domination when they take on their English counterparts in the second and tour-ending Youth Test at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in Chattogram beginning from today.

The young Tigers won the lone T20 against England U-19 to start the tour, then swept the three-match one-day series, before a punishing eight-wicket win in the first four-day that ended at the same venue on February 10.

England's batsmen found it very difficult to negotiate Bangladesh's bowling in the first youth Test, as they folded for 280 in the first innings and 152 in the second. In between, the home batsmen responded with 398 for nine declared with skipper Akbar Ali and Shahadat Hossain hitting fifties.

England's capitulation in the second innings, courtesy of left-arm spinner Minhaur Rahman's six for 28, left the hosts the simple task of chasing 35 for victory, which they achieved with ease.

## Gabriel offers apology for sledge

REUTERS, Gros Islet

West Indies fast bowler Shannon Gabriel sought to clear the air over what he said to England captain Joe Root and extended an "unreserved apology" for his comments during the third Test against England in St Lucia.

Gabriel, 30, had accepted a charge for breaching the International Cricket Council's code of conduct on Wednesday and was banned for the first four one-day internationals against England that begin on Wednesday.

"The exchange occurred during a tense moment on the field," Gabriel explained in a written statement.

Gabriel also said there were no hard feelings between him and Root.

## Victoria, Farashganj register wins

SPORTS REPORTER

Victoria Sporting Club and Farashganj Sporting Club registered victories in their respective matches of the Bangladesh Championship League at the Bishreshtha Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur yesterday.

In the day's first match, Victoria handed a 3-1 defeat to Shadhinata Krira Sangha. Murshed had opened the scoring for Shadhinata KS in the 14th minute but Habib equalised for Victoria in the 33rd minute. Rana gave Victoria the lead in the 44th minute before Rony wrapped up the victory 10 minutes after the restart.

In the day's second match, Farashganj SC beat Wari Club 1-0, thanks to an 82nd-minute strike from Zillur.

## 'A blessing to be playing again'

AFP, Durban

Dale Steyn bowled his way past another milestone and enabled South Africa to gain an advantage over Sri Lanka on the second day of the first Test at Kingsmead on Thursday.

Steyn, 35, took four for 48 as South Africa took a first innings lead of 44. They stretched their lead to 170 by reaching 126 for four at the close. It took Steyn's career total to 437 Test wickets, moving him past India's Kapil Dev (434) and drawing level with Stuart Broad of England in joint seventh place on the all-time list.

"It's just a blessing to be able to be playing again," he said. "I almost feel like I've had to start over. I don't feel I'm on 430-odd wickets, I'm on probably twenty. It's nice to finish a Test series against Pakistan and not have someone saying he's an injury away from retiring and it's nice to contribute again."

Steyn bowled a 10-over spell after lunch in an effort to blow away Sri Lanka's tail, which he said he believed was only the third time in a 92-Test career he had bowled so many overs in succession. "When I'm bowling ten-over spells it shows I'm enjoying what I do," he said.

SCORES IN BRIEF

**SOUTH AFRICA:** First innings 235 and second innings 126 for 4 (Elgar 35, Markram 28; Ambuldeniya 2-36)

**SRI LANKA:** First innings 191 all out (Karanaratne 30, K Perera 51; Steyn 4-48, Philander 2-32)

## FROM THE LAND OF THE LONG WHITE CLOUD

### Mashrafe's love for his son

SPORTS REPORTER from Napier

Bangladesh skipper Mashrafe Bin Mortaza was busy on the phone with his wife for a long time, seemingly sad over some issue. He later revealed that it was due to his wife scolding his son, Sahel, for being naughty at school. The inspiration skipper tried to cheer his son up with a long conversation on the phone, attempting to create a humorous atmosphere by telling his wife that he himself was naughty during childhood so it was natural for his son to be that way before eventually making things normal. It's not just on the field where Mashrafe inspires by his presence and performance; the 35-year-old does the same thing as a father, even if he is thousands of miles from his family.

### 'Now Boult teases me'

Ever since Tamim Iqbal's fear of flying in small aircrafts was mentioned in a report by The Daily Star earlier this week, the left-hander has been left blushing over the issue. That was exacerbated by the fact that a local newspaper had quoted the report, leading to New Zealand cricketers like Trent Boult and Ross Taylor teasing the 29-year-old about the incident by mimicking a flying plane with their hands and indicating that it was shaking. Upon meeting this reporter again, Tamim remarked: "What have you done? Now even Boult teases me over my fear of flying in small aircrafts and then laughs about it."

