



This picture of Tamim Iqbal sitting on the ground after losing his wicket to a Tim Southee bouncer on 74 probably best depicts the Tigers' hapless situation in the first of a three-match Test series against New Zealand at Hamilton yesterday. With the Kiwis sitting pretty on a 715-run first innings total, the match has become all but a lost cause for the visitors.

PHOTO: BCB

## Tigers' failings or a lack of planning?

MAZHAR UDDIN from Hamilton

The sights of a batsman falling to the ground while trying to survive a bouncer and a tired bowler with his head down have been features of the Bangladesh cricketers as they head towards a comprehensive defeat in the first of the three-match Test series against New Zealand at Seddon Park.

The visitors are undoubtedly having a tough time on their tour, on which nothing has gone right for the Tigers; be it with bat or ball.

Many may point their fingers at the cricketers for failing to adapt to the tough conditions in New Zealand, but the question is whether the authorities really wanted to prepare the players according to the challenges, which they knew well before arriving.

For example, do the three Bangladesh pacers have the experience of bowling more than 25 overs in a first-class competition? Have they really gotten enough support from pitches on the domestic circuit which would allow them to bowl many overs and test their stamina?

The young Bangladesh pace bowling trio of Khaled Ahmed, Abu Jayed and debutant Ebadot Hossain conceded a combined 369 runs from 87 overs while managing to pick just one wicket as New Zealand went on to post their highest-ever total of 715 for six before declaring.

On the other hand, the hosts banked on a

COMPARISON OF BOUNCERS		
Bangladesh		New Zealand
51	Bouncers	120
23	Runs conceded	78
None	Wickets	7
42	Left by the batsman	81
82%	% of balls left	67%

  

PACERS' AVG BOWLING SPEED		
Bangladesh		New Zealand
Khaled: 131 km/h		Boult: 138 km/h
Ebadot: 129 km/h		Wagner: 135 km/h
Jayed: 126 km/h		Southee: 132 km/h

42, scoring 23 runs and not losing a wicket.

Another big reason for the huge difference in bouncers between the two sides was the pace behind the ball. The average speed of Trent Boult was 138 km/h, Wagner 135 km/h and Tim Southee 132 km/h.

Even the fastest among the lot for the Tigers, Khaled with an average speed of 131 km/h, was behind New Zealand's slowest bowler while Ebadot and Jayed bowled at an average speed of 129 and 126 km/h respectively.

It is not the Tigers' fault for not being able to bowl at good pace. It is the responsibility of the Bangladesh Cricket Board to groom seamers with proper guidance and planning much like India did with their fast bowlers in constructing what is now one of the best seam-bowling line-ups in the world.

The same goes for the batsmen as Tamim Iqbal has remained the only visiting batsman to find a way to negotiate the Kiwis' bouncer strategy, mostly due to his experience of playing for so long in the international circuit. But apart from the left-hander, how many others have actually faced those challenges?

It is also the responsibility of the players to prepare themselves as individuals, but when you are habituated to winning Test matches inside three days at home with the help of tailor-made pitches, you should expect the same when you are abroad. So, they better be prepared for it.

## 'A terrific knock all around'

AGENCIES, Hamilton

For the third time in his career as Black Caps batting coach, Craig McMillan sat back and soaked in the pleasure of watching his troops making history.

The first came in Wellington in 2014, when the Black Caps smashed 680-8 against India to set a new mark for their highest Test innings score. Nine months later, they topped it with 690 against Pakistan in Sharjah, and on Saturday, they re-set the record once more, crushing an incredible 715-6 before declaring against Bangladesh at Seddon Park in Hamilton.

McMillan has had the best view in the house for all three performances, and was elated with his side's performance in this Test.

"It was right up there [with the best]. Obviously it was historic in the amount of runs scored, and the contributions throughout the innings makes it very special, and one that the guys are really proud of."

It was an innings set up by a 254-run partnership between twin centurions Jeet Raval and Tom Latham on Friday, but Saturday was dominated by Kane

Williamson, who reached his second double century, crafting an exquisite unbeaten 200 which left McMillan singing his praises.

"He was sublime today – whenever the Bangladeshi bowlers missed, he hurt them, he was very efficient when they offered scoring opportunities and created those partnerships that we talk a lot about."

"It's not easy, and it takes a lot of hard work behind the scenes that allows him to play like that. He's very hard to bowl at as he bats 360 degrees – all around the wicket. Bowlers only have to err a fraction with Kane, and he hurts them, and we saw that today – a terrific knock all around."

While Williamson could have gone on to threaten his high score of 242 – and even Brendon McCullum's 302 if the Black Caps were feeling really ambitious – McMillan explained the reasoning to pull the pin with plenty of time left up their sleeve.

"The milestones weren't an issue at all. We wanted to bat for a period where we could see the wear and tear in the surface – starting to see those cracks open up and develop a little bit. [Williamson] obviously reached that milestone and thought 'Now's the time' – and we wanted the bowlers to have a decent crack, not just a short hour at the end of the day."

### TRIVIA

New Zealand declared on 715 for six in the first innings, their highest ever total in Tests.

It was the second-highest Test total posted against Bangladesh, after Sri Lanka's 730-6 declared in Dhaka in 2014.

New Zealand skipper Kane Williamson became the fastest Kiwi player to score 6,000 Test runs. Williamson also became the first Kiwi to notch 20 Test centuries.

New Zealand's scoring rate of 4.38 is the third-highest for any team who have scored 700 or more in an innings in Tests.

Mehedi Hasan Miraz's economy rate of 5.02 in 49 overs is the worst by any bowler who bowled 45 or more overs in Tests.

New Zealand's 481-run lead is their biggest first-innings lead in Tests.

This is the second time that the top three Kiwi batsmen have scored centuries in an innings.



New Zealand skipper Kane Williamson hit an awe-inspiring double century, laced with 19 fours, while remaining not out to help the Kiwis post a herculean 715 for six on the third day of the first Test against Bangladesh in Hamilton yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

### BD-NZ SCOREBOARD

**BANGLADESH:** First innings 234 (Tamim 126, Liton 29, Shadman 24; Wagner 5-47, Southee 3-76)

**NEW ZEALAND:** 1st Innings R/B 4s/6s

Raval c Khaled 132/220 19/1

b Mahmudullah

Latham c Mithun

b Soumya 161/248 17/3

Williamson not out 200/257 19/0

Taylor lbw b Soumya 4/19 0/0

Nicholls b Mehedi 53/81 7/0

Wagner c Liton b Ebadot 47/35 6/3

Watling c Liton b Mehedi 31/67 2/0

Grandhomme not out 76/53 4/5

Extras: (lb-7, nb-2, w-2) 11

Total: (For six wickets declared in 163 overs) 715

Did not bat: Astle, Southee, Boult.

Fall of wickets: 1-254, 2-333, 3-349, 4-449, 5-509, 6-605.

**Bowler** O M R W

Jayed 30 5 103 0

Ebadot 27 4 107 1

Khaled 30 6 149 0

Soumya 21 1 68 2

Mehedi 49 2 246 2

Mahmudullah 1 0 3 1

Mominul 5 0 32 0

**BANGLADESH:** 2nd Innings R/B 4s/6s

Tamim c Watling b Southee 74/86 12/1

Shadman c Boult b Wagner 37/71 5/0

Mominul c Taylor b Boult 8/6 2/0

Mithun c Williamson b Boult 0/4 0/0

Soumya not out 39/51 6/1

Mahmudullah not out 15/40 3/0

Extras: (w-1) 1

Total: (For 4 wickets in 43 overs) 174

Yet to bat: Liton, Mehedi, Khaled, Jayed, Ebadot.

Fall of wickets: 1-88, 2-100, 3-110, 4-126.

**Bowler** O M R W

Boult 11 1 53 2

Southee 13 2 54 1

Grandhomme 5 1 15 0

Wagner 12 2 48 1

Astle 2 1 4 0

## GIVING UP HIS ALL FOR THE LOVE OF FOOTBALL

48-year-old Rayhan Bulu has been voluntarily giving football and physical education to primary school kids of class I through X in the suburbs of Bogura's Gabtoli upazila for the last 26 years. Even six months ago he used to own a 31 tin-shed household but now he lives in a small tin-shed room, thanks to his benevolent nature. The man, while earning his living as a day-labourer albeit a culturally-minded one, showcased immense effort to provide for children's football training. He made ends meet through great personal sacrifices and his work bore results and contributed to society. This is his story written by Mostafa Shabuj.



Rayhan Bulu takes his disciples through some drills ahead of their football training session at a local field in Kadamtali, Gabtoli in Bogura.

PHOTO: MOSTAFA SHABUJ



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## SA, SL seek WC prep First ODI kicks off today

AGENCIES, Johannesburg



The Cricket World Cup looms large for both South Africa and Sri Lanka when they meet in the first one of the five-match ODI series starting at the Wanderers Stadium on Sunday.

While South Africa will be keen to get back to winning form after shock losses to the Lankans in two home Tests, both teams appear to be undecided on their best 15 players for the World Cup in England and Wales, starting in May.

South Africa have picked a 14-man squad packed with bowlers for the first three internationals, indicating the matches could help decide their best bowling combinations for the World Cup, while Sri Lanka have a squad of 17 players, two more than they can take to the global event.

Both teams have moderate recent records. South Africa have won 12 and lost 10 matches since the start of 2018, while Sri Lanka have six wins, 13 losses and a no-result in the same period.

South Africa's one-day squad includes only five of the players who appeared in the Tests and Sri Lanka have retained only seven of the victorious Test team - but Sri Lanka's Test wins are sure to add spice to the series despite the change in format and likely conditions.

South Africa will welcome a return to the faster pitches of Johannesburg and Centurion, venue of the second match, after losing the Test matches on the slower surfaces of Durban and Port Elizabeth, where the third and fourth matches will be played.

Fast bowlers Lungi Ngidi and uncapped Anrich Nortje, both recovered after long-term injuries, could provide a challenge to the Sri Lankan batsmen, while veteran Dale Steyn will be keen to show that he is still worth a World Cup place.

The South African selectors will be monitoring the fitness of JP Duminy, regarded as a key player if South Africa are to challenge at the World Cup.

He was due to return to domestic cricket with the Cape Cobras on Friday after missing most of the season because of a shoulder injury.

Sri Lanka's squad has been bolstered by the inclusion of experienced players Malinga, Upul Tharanga and Thisara Perera who did not play in the Tests.



## What remedy for repetitive away blues?

Bangladesh's troubles away from home, especially in Tests are well known. They crumbled in extraordinary fashion in the West Indies last year so it was expected that they will also struggle in New Zealand. Spin coach Sunil Joshi reiterated that it was normal to struggle away from home but adaptation is necessary in foreign conditions. But one does not easily fail to see that Bangladesh have been playing Tests for a long time and have a core group of experienced players.



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