

SPORT



Fizz headlines strong showing

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It seems the Bangladesh think tank are doing exactly what was needed from the Tigers' tri-nation campaign in Ireland in terms of application from the bowlers, which was an area of major concern going into the Ireland tour, which will lead into the ICC World Cup in the UK.

Much like the first game against the West Indies, the Bangladeshi bowlers once again replicated their game plan to good effect in their second meeting against the Caribbean side in Dublin yesterday, where a win would secure Bangladesh a place in the final.

West Indies elected to bat and managed to post a modest 247 for nine in 50 overs, riding on Shai Hope's 87 and skipper Jason Holder's 62. The best news for Bangladesh was that the hitherto struggling Mustafizur Rahman bagged four wickets while skipper Mashrafe bin Mortaza continued his good form with a three-for at the Malahide Cricket Club.

It would have been a huge relief for the team management to see Mustafizur rediscover his groove as he had been struggling with his line and length in the past few games.

The left-arm seamer not only picked up four wickets for 43 runs from ten 10 overs, which included a maiden, he also bowled 30 dot balls and was able to flummox the Windies batters with his well-directed cutters.

The 23-year-old first picked up Roston Chase when the right-hander was caught at short mid-wicket on 19, and later trapped Jonathan Carter leg before for three. The Fizz once again came into the act by removed Ashley Nurse and debutant Raymon Reifer in the 49th over as West Indies added just 36 runs in the last five overs.

Much like the first game against the West Indies, Tigers skipper Mashrafe provided timely breakthroughs and picked up three wickets, although the pacer gave away 60 runs from 10 overs.

He removed the dangerous-looking opener Sunil Ambris, who smashed a hundred in the previous game against Ireland, by getting him well caught at slip by Soumya Sarkar for 23 off 19 balls.

The 35-year-old drew blood once again by dispatching top-scorer Hope, caught behind after he along with skipper Holder added 100 runs for the fifth wicket -- the only significant partnership.

Mashrafe went on to pick the wicket of Holder too in his next over as West Indies were unable to accelerate in the final stages.

Bangladesh spinners Shakib AL Hasan and Mehedi Hasan Miraz once again bowled brilliantly in the middle overs to keep the West Indies batsmen quiet.

Shakib, who picked up the wicket of Fabian Allen, ended up giving away just 27 runs from 10 overs while Mehedi removed Darren Bravo early on and finished with figures of 41 for one from 10 overs.

Bangladesh made one change in this game after pacer Mohammad Saifuddin suffered from back pain, allowing pacer Abu Jayed to make his ODI debut. The right-arm seamer was however unable to make his debut a memorable one, going wicket-less and conceding 56 runs from nine overs.



Bangladesh opener Soumya Sarkar provided a solid start to the Tigers' innings in an ODI tri-series match against West Indies with a 67-ball 54 before falling prey to the spin stylings of Ashley Nurse in Dublin yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Bangladesh pacer Mustafizur Rahman (C) picked up four wickets to help pave the way for a five-wicket win over West Indies in an ODI tri-series encounter in Dublin yesterday. In chase of a modest 247 for nine, the Tigers reached the target in 47.2 overs.

PHOTO: AFP

BD-WI SCOREBOARD	
WEST INDIES	R/B 46/6s
Hope c Mushfiqur b Mashrafe	87/108 6/1
Ambris c Soumya b Mashrafe	23/19 4/0
Bravo lbw b Mehedi	6/13 1/0
Chase c Mahmudullah	
b Mustafizur	19/29 2/0
Carter lbw b Mustafizur	3/14 0/0
Holder c Mushfiqur b Mashrafe	62/76 3/1
Allen lbw b Shakib	7/9 1/0
Nurse c Sabbir b Mustafizur	14/12 1/0
Reifer lbw b Mustafizur	7/12 0/0
Roach not out	3/4 0/0
Cottrell not out	8/4 0/1
Extras: (b-1, lb-4, w-3)	8
Total: (For 9 wickets in 50 overs)	247
Fall of wickets: 1-37, 2-56, 3-89, 4-99, 5-199, 6-207, 7-211, 8-234, 9-236.	
Bowler	O M R W
Jayed	9 0 56 0
Mashrafe	10 0 60 3
Mehedi	10 0 41 1
Mustafizur	9 1 43 4
Shakib	10 1 27 1
Soumya	2 0 15 0
BANGLADESH	R/B 46/6s
Tamim b Nurse	21/27 4/2
Soumya c Ambris b Nurse	54/67 4/0
Shakib c Chase b Nurse	29/35 3/0
Mushfiqur c Bravo b Roach	63/73 5/1
Mithun b Holder	43/53 2/2
Mahmudullah not out	30/34 1/1
Sabbir not out	0/0 0/0
Extras: (lb-2, nb-1, w-5)	8
Total: (For 5 wickets in 47.2 overs)	248
Fall of wickets: 1-54, 2-106, 3-107, 4-190, 5-240.	
Bowler	O M R W
Roach	6 0 46 1
Cottrell	9.2 0 38 0
Nurse	10 0 53 3
Chase	6 0 24 0
Allen	3 0 11 0
Holder	8 1 43 1
Reifer	5 0 31 0
Player-of-the-match: Mustafizur Rahman	
Result: Bangladesh won by 5 wickets.	



'I'm chasing consistency'

AFP, Southampton

Joe Buttler refused to put a limit on his rapid run-scoring as hosts England go in search of a first men's World Cup title.

Despite appearing in every World Cup since the inaugural edition in 1975, England have never lifted the trophy, with the last of their three losing appearances in the final back in 1992.

But hopes are high that 2019 may finally be their year, with key batsman Buttler coming into form ahead of England's tournament opener against South Africa at The Oval on May 30.

The 28-year-old went to three figures in just 50 balls, celebrating the landmark with a baby-rocking gesture as wife Louise and new daughter Georgia looked on from the stands.

Only Buttler himself, with a 46-ball effort against Pakistan in November 2015, has scored a quicker ODI hundred for England.

But the 28-year-old, who has five of England's quickest 10 ODI hundreds to his credit, believes a new national record could be within his reach.

"Absolutely," he said following his match-winning 110 not out against Pakistan.

"When the opportunities arise, it



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gives you lots of confidence. We've seen other guys around the world show it's possible."

"In the last few years, I've had some brilliant experiences.

"A couple more years older and worked things out a bit better, managing to drip-feed them into my game really well.

"I'm really chasing that consistency and want to perform every day. That's been a big part of the last few years to try and be more consistent."

'Bumrah best in the world'

AFP, New Delhi

Indian cricket great Sachin Tendulkar on Monday hailed Jasprit Bumrah as the "best bowler in the world" after the Mumbai Indians pacer played a key role in his team's fourth Indian Premier League title win.

The 25-year-old took 2-14 in Sunday's IPL final as Mumbai edged Chennai Super Kings by one run in the thrilling finale in Hyderabad.

He is set to lead India's pace attack at the World Cup, which starts in England and Wales later this month.

"Without any doubt, let me go on record and say that he is the best bowler in the world at this stage," said Tendulkar, an advisor to the Mumbai team.

"The best is yet to come."

With Lasith Malinga giving away 32 runs from his first three overs and Chennai needing 18 off the last 12 balls, Bumrah choked the opposition in the penultimate over and sent Dwayne Bravo back to the pavilion for 15. He was named man-of-the-match for his efforts.

"Winning a fourth title for Mumbai makes me very happy," said Bumrah, the top-ranked bowler in the world in the one-day format.

"I was surprisingly very calm. I wasn't panicking, just focusing on the next ball."

Bumrah has picked up 85 wickets in 49 ODIs and 51 scalps in 42 T20 games for India since his international debut in January 2016.

'Approach each game positively'

In the lead-up to the 2019 World Cup, we take a look back on World Cups past through the eyes of Bangladesh's former World Cup stars. Aftab Ahmed, who featured in the 2007 World Cup, 16 Tests, 85 ODIs and 11 T20Is for Bangladesh, was undoubtedly considered as one of the most promising cricketers during his playing days. However after a somewhat premature end to his playing days, the 33-year-old began his coaching career, a high point of which was guiding Legends of Rugganj to second position in the recently concluded Dhaka Premier League. In an interview with The Daily Star's Nabid Yeasin, Aftab shared some of his World Cup memories and more.



The Daily Star (TDS): How did it feel to represent Bangladesh in the 2007 World Cup -- the only World Cup you featured in? Aftab Ahmed (AA): It was definitely a different experience because the focus on World Cup matches is slightly higher than the normal international matches. Every team dreams of playing in the World Cup and it is such a platform that if any player or team performs well then they get more exposure as the focus always remains greater there. So a World Cup is always special for any player.

TDS: You made some notable contributions in that World Cup, especially against South Africa as you scored 35 runs and also had an important 76-run partnership with Mohammad Ashraful. How did it feel to contribute in that historic win over South Africa? AA: It felt great to score some runs and contribute to Bangladesh's win. I actually saw replays of those matches a few days ago. However, as I said, a World Cup is different from any other tournament or international

game in the sense that a World Cup comes every four years and if any player misses the chance to perform well in one World Cup, then actually has to wait another four years. Even after that, it always remains uncertain whether or not the same player would make the World Cup squad after such a long time. Whereas in case of any other international fixture, a player could always hope to do well in the next game as there are frequent international fixtures or series but it is totally different in the World Cup's case. So players feel a different sort of pressure there and only the players with strong mentalities have more chances to do well.

TDS: Do you have any memorable experiences at the World Cup? AA: Actually I cannot pick any specific experience in that World Cup. I played good cricket before that and went to play the World Cup and it obviously felt good. It actually becomes difficult to perform in a World Cup if a player fails to click in the first few games. I felt that pressure at the time.

TDS: As a batsman yourself, how do you think the batsmen should perform on the true wickets in England in order to do well in the World Cup? AA: Bangladesh's current batting unit is actually very good. Players like Tamim [Iqbal],

[Mahmudullah] Riyad and Shakib [AL Hasan] are very capable of scoring big runs. But aside from these players, if the other batsmen can support them then Bangladesh can do really well. For instance, Soumya [Sarkar] is such a player that if he scores then it is of great help for any team. If you consider the Dhaka League, then you can see that it was his hundred against us [Legends of Rugganj] that turned the tide and also his double-century against Sheikh Jamal helped Abahani win by a huge eight or nine wicket margin. So if players like Soumya can score runs and provide support then it becomes very easy for the experienced players. However, for the bowlers it would be very difficult since the wickets in England are true wickets. The bowlers need to be economical and I think even conceding 40-50 runs in ten overs is a very good effort. It will be very important for the bowlers to work on slowers and yorkers as I think these will come in very handy in England and I also noticed that it is very easy to hit and score runs off length balls in England. One other thing is that if the bowlers can keep it tight with variations at the death then Bangladesh can hope to go far in the tournament.

TDS: Do have a message for the team? AA: My only message to the squad would be to think positive and approach each game positively.

Rabbi guides BD U-16

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Yet another all-round performance from Mahfuzur Rahman Rabbi helped the Bangladesh U-16 team defeat their Pakistani counterparts by 17 runs in their second 50-over match at the Sheikh Abu Naser Stadium in Khulna yesterday.

Electing to bat, despite a 102-ball 69 from opener Mofizul Islam Robin and 52 from Aich Molla, Bangladesh were in a spot of bother as they lost five wickets for 171 runs in 39.4 overs. However, Rabbi's unbeaten 34-ball 44 helped the young Tigers reach 259 for seven.

After the exchange, it was again Rabbi who was decisive with the ball. He scalped three wickets for 50 runs in his 10-over spell to help restrict Pakistan to 242 for nine in their allotted 50 overs.

Anderson suffers injury

AFP, London

England spearhead James Anderson could be in for a "painful few days" according to Lancashire coach Glen Chappell after suffering a knee injury while on county duty.

Anderson, England's all-time leading Test wicket-taker, was hit on the inside of his knee by a drive from James Fuller during Lancashire's four-wicket defeat by champions Hampshire in a One-Day Cup semifinal on Sunday.

MSC down archrivals Abahani

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A magnificent century from Sharmin Akter Supta helped Mohammedan Sporting Club register a comfortable 39-run victory over archrivals Abahani Limited during their Premier Division Women's Cricket League encounter at BKSP-3 in Savar yesterday.

Electing to bat, opener Supta was in fine touch as her 130-ball 100 alongside Salma Khatun's 51-ball 52 in the middle proved crucial. Supta and Salma shared 74 runs among them for the fourth wicket to help Mohammedan post a challenging 245 for six.

After the exchange, Abahani fell short as the Dhanmondi-based outfit could only manage 206 in 45.4 overs with Sharmin Sultana top scoring for the side with 64 runs off 69 balls, however, none of the other batters were able to contribute significantly.

At BKSP-4, an unbeaten 49-ball 50 from Sultana Khatun ensured that Khelaghar Shamaj Kalyan Shamity were able to chase down Keraniganj Cricket Academy's 120-run total in just 24.1 overs with six wickets to spare.

