



There was devastating news in the Bangladesh camp during training at The Oval yesterday ahead of their World Cup opener against South Africa tomorrow as star opener Tamim Iqbal walked off the pitch clutching his wrist after being hit in the area by a ball. PHOTO: BCB

Third seamer conundrum

SPORTS REPORTER from London

As if on cue, just before a big event a settled team combination for Bangladesh now looks uncertain ahead of their World Cup opener against South Africa tomorrow at The Oval. The Tigers had a fair idea of their bowling combination, having persisted with pace-bowling all-rounder Mohammad Saifuddin through the Ireland tri-series earlier this month in the belief that the youngster would be an ideal option to support the main pacers in ODI skipper Mashrafe Bin Mortaza and Mustafizur Rahman, while shoring up the lower order with his batting ability.

But the back spasms he suffered in the warm-up against India on May 27 has put his participation in doubt for tomorrow's game. Fortunately for Bangladesh, they have an able replacement in fast bowler Rubel Hossain, who took two wickets in the warm-up, but bowling coach Courtney Walsh hinted Saifuddin is the first choice.

"Rubel has not played a lot of games leading up to the World Cup. If you are going to have three pacers, I think they will probably stick with the guys who have been playing so far," Walsh said yesterday. "With Saifuddin's injury, it has opened up again. You have to play who is fitter on the day. If Saifuddin doesn't come through tomorrow [Saturday], then to think about it. If he comes through, the headache is for the selectors about who to leave out."

It is a marker of how far Bangladesh have come that selectorial headaches now extend to the bowling department. "It's a good thing to have that kind of depth. At the moment we are pretty confident that we have got enough in terms of bowlers if someone breaks down or pulls out of the game at the last minute."

As far as the pace department goes, Mustafizur's performance in the warm-up match, where he troubled India's top order with pace and swing, was particularly pleasing for Walsh. "I said from day one when he got injured [in 2016] that it would take some time to heal and for him to get strong and match-fit. And he is heading in the right direction," Walsh said when asked if the Fizz was back to his best. "Only now he is getting back to where he was. Confidence will come with that, his natural strength will come back. It was not a minor injury that he had; it's good to see him heading in the right direction."

Tamim headlines injury concerns

SPORTS REPORTER from London

Bangladesh's preparations ahead of their first World Cup match against South Africa at The Oval on Sunday seemed to have sustained a huge blow as Tamim Iqbal walked off the nets at south London's iconic venue clutching his left forearm after being hit in the area by a ball during net practice around noon yesterday.

Tamim went for a scan later yesterday and the X-Ray showed no fracture, the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) informed. "I will assess Tamim further tomorrow [Saturday], after which it will be determined whether he would need to go for further tests to assess his availability for Sunday's match," team physio Thihan Chandramohan said yesterday evening.

It added to a growing list of injuries as skipper Mashrafe Bin Mortaza is nursing some hamstring issues, all-rounder Mohammad Saifuddin did not partake in practice yesterday because of a back spasm he experienced in the warm-up against India on Tuesday and Mustafizur Rahman has some calf trouble.

Tamim, the country's highest run-scorer and the opener who sets the tone of the innings was engaged in a net session where he was facing fast balls delivered through a sidearm by fielding coach Tim Cook. At about 11:30pm local time he was hit on the lower portion of his left forearm by a bouncer and left the session immediately.

Team manager Khaled Mahmud informed within the hour that the left-hander was not feeling too bad about his wrist.

"It's a bit too early to say anything about his injury. However, Tamim is feeling quite well. He said there is no need to do any scan, but we will do a scan today as a precautionary measure," said Mahmud. "He just got hit in the nets," said Bangladesh bowling coach Courtney Walsh in a press conference that started within five minutes of Tamim going into the dressing room. "It's a concern because he came off immediately."

Tamim also missed Bangladesh's warm-up game against India in Cardiff on May 28, when he was rested as a precautionary measure as the left-hander experienced discomfort after taking a spill during fielding practice the previous day.

"The good thing is that we have time on our side because we are not playing until

Sunday, so we have today and tomorrow to reassess," Walsh said. "Saifuddin, in the last game, had a lot of stiffness, so today is his complete day off as he is recovering. We will reassess him tomorrow with the advice of the physio. I think Mash has got some niggles as well. He is not doing much today, tomorrow we will reassess him."

"Fizz is okay in the sense that it's stiffness, but he is able to bowl with it. He has just had a bowling session, so we will see how he pulls up. If he pulls up okay then he can bowl again tomorrow. If it's a concern then we have to make sure that the workload is managed and that he is okay for the game. In Saifuddin's case, it has flared up, so it is best to be safe, and make sure that he gets adequate rest and then reassess him tomorrow."

HAPPY MOMENT

H2 SUV LEADER

ANCAP 5 STAR

3 YEAR 60000 KM WARRANTY

01914448800 haval.com.bd

Shai Hope went airborne, jumping to his right and was seemingly parallel to the ground when he took a stunning catch to dismiss Babar Azam off an Oshane Thomas delivery. The jaw dropping catch was of immense significance as that stopped Babar, who was earlier dropped on 12, from posing any sort of threat whatsoever on a day where Pakistan were totally outclassed by a sharp West Indies side.

BEST QUOTE



Afghanistan have turned into a world-class side at times, they've got some of the best bowlers in the world and their batting is improving all the time. You can never take a side like that for granted. They are a dangerous side and we've seen around the world some of the performances their players are putting up in very strong domestic competitions.

Aaron Finch of Australia

Baz predicts one win for Tigers!

AGENCIES, Auckland

The 2019 World Cup is underway and the hosts lived up to the billing by defeating South Africa in the opening game. It is going to be a long haul for all the teams as they will have to play as many as nine matches to make it to the knockout stage. Consistency will be key for them even as the cricket experts have put their prediction hats on. Brendon McCullum has also joined the list now and has predicted the outcomes of the league stage.

According to a note in his diary, England and India will be the top two sides at the end of the league stage of the competition. McCullum thinks the home side will lose to Australia and beat all the other teams while the Men in Blue will lose only one game to England. The former Kiwi cricketer also went on to back Afghanistan to be at the seventh position after nine matches with two wins over Sri Lanka and Bangladesh.

Brendon McCullum, on his official Instagram account, posted the prediction. He believes that Sri Lanka and Bangladesh will only manage to win a solitary match. Interestingly, he feels that the Islanders will get better of the Windies and lose to rest of the sides, while Bangladesh's only win will come against Sri Lanka.

As for the semifinalists apart from India and England, McCullum feels that Australia will be the third to go through with six wins and three losses to Windies, India and Pakistan. Another interesting prediction from the 37-year-old is that there will be a four-way tie for the fourth position between the Windies, Pakistan, South Africa and New Zealand.

"Four teams will fight out the fourth qualifying spot and net run rate will decide who progresses. Rain and luck will likely play a part as well. I hope NZ get that little bit of luck and can qualify. Enjoy the six-week celebration of the best players on the planet," McCullum wrote on Instagram alongside a picture of his predictions.

8 wins 1 loss SA, Aus, NZ, Pak, Afg, Ind, Bang, SL Eng	Australia 6 wins 3 losses Afg, SL, Bang, Eng, NZ, SA WI, Ind, Pak	New Zealand 5 wins 4 losses SL, Bang, Afg, SA, WI Ind, Pak, Aus, Eng	West Indies 5 wins 4 losses Pak, Aus, Bang, SL, Afg SA, Eng, NZ, Ind
4 losses Eng, Ind, NZ, Aus Pakistan 5 wins 4 losses SL, Aus, NZ, Afg, Bang WI, Eng, Ind, SA	Afghanistan 2 wins 7 losses SL, Bang Aus, NZ, SA, Eng, Ind, Pak, WI	Sri Lanka 1 win 8 losses WI NZ, Afg, Pak, Bang, Aus, Eng, SA, Ind	Bangladesh 1 win 8 losses SL SA, NZ, Eng, WI, Aus, Afg, Ind, Pak

Maggi

ম্যাগী টেস্টেকারে আছে ১৩টি মশলার অনন্য মিশ্রণ। তাই মাই ম্যাগী, টু... ইয়াশ্বি!

- শেহতাজ, মডেল ও অভিনেত্রী

ম্যাগী ও শেহতাজের গল্পটি দেখতে এখনই ভিজিট করুন f/MaggiBangladesh

Nestlé
Good Food, Good Life!