



## ‘No final word on Mash farewell’

SPORTS REPORTER



The issue of Bangladesh ODI skipper Mashrafe Bin Mortaza's retirement is still a cloudy one as the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) are yet undecided on how to provide the inspirational cricketer a farewell.

Making the issue murkier still is that the 35-year-old has not clarified his thoughts on retirement.

As there are no more ODIs for Bangladesh this year in ICC's Future Tours Programme, there has been speculation about whether the BCB would arrange any fifty-over series at home to bid farewell to Mashrafe, who has already retired from T20I cricket.

There is a one-off Test and two T20Is against Afghanistan at home later this year. Plans are afoot to include Zimbabwe and host a T20I tri-series after the Test.

There was also talk about whether the BCB would change the T20I tri-nation series involving Afghanistan and Zimbabwe into an ODI series – which presumably would give Mashrafe a chance to retire in front of a home crowd, as he wished -- but according to BCB CEO Nizamuddin Chowdhury, that is still not confirmed.

"I am yet to receive any final instructions [on arranging a series to bid farewell to Mashrafe] as it's a policy-based decision. So far, what we have communicated [to ZCB] is that there is a tri-nation series involving

Bangladesh, Afghanistan and Zimbabwe and we are heading in that direction," Nizamuddin told reporters yesterday.

Meanwhile, the BCB is yet to announce the schedule for the one-off Test against Afghanistan and it was learned that the visitors will take part in the Test between August 31 and September 10, which will be followed by the tri-nation series.

"First, there will be a Test series with Afghanistan and then we will play the tri-nation or bilateral T20I or ODI series during the first week of September. So far there are some optional discussions going on between the boards but I think if Afghanistan confirms, we will go with the T20s," he said.

Although Zimbabwe cricket has been suspended by the ICC over political interferences, the BCB CEO informed that there will not be any issues for Zimbabwe to take part in the series.

Questions still remain for the Tigers fans on when actually Mashrafe will retire from international cricket as the cricketer previously informed that he wished to bid farewell to the game in front of a home crowd.

Even if the BCB manages to arrange an ODI series at their own expense as a tribute to the legendary cricketer, it will mean little without an official announcement from Mashrafe – who has maintained radio silence recently -- about his retirement to make his stance clear.

## BCB yet to receive WC reports

SPORTS REPORTER



Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) CEO Nizamuddin Chowdhury informed yesterday that they are yet to receive a manager's and coach's report on the Tigers' overall performance in the recent ICC Cricket World Cup in England.

The team reached home on July 7 from the World Cup, and Nizamuddin said that they did not get the report as the team embarked on a tour of Sri Lanka soon after.

"Right after the World Cup we had a series against Sri Lanka. And during the board meeting, our team was already in Sri Lanka. We hope that we will get the report soon and we will discuss it in the next meeting," said the BCB CEO.

The usual norms followed by any cricket board is that the manager of the team will provide an evaluation report while an official report is also expected from the coach regarding the team's overall performance following any international tour or tournament.

However, the BCB is seemingly reluctant to get the report from former head coach Steve Rhodes -- with whom the game's local governing body parted ways after the World Cup -- and the overall team report from Khaled Mahmud, who was team manager during the quadrennial mega event. This brings in to question about the BCB's ideology on long term planning just ahead of another possible series.

## Steyn among the best that I played: Sachin

AGENCIES, New Delhi



Legendary Sachin Tendulkar paid a fitting tribute to great Dale Steyn the day he announced his retirement from Test cricket after playing 93 matches in the game's traditional format for South Africa.

Tendulkar hailed Steyn among the best he faced during his 24-year stay at the top, a compliment to savour for any bowler.

"I have to say that without any doubt, he's amongst the top bowlers that I played in my 24-year career," the master himself told on Monday. "I thought that something which was incredible, but he managed to do consistently was that late outswinger and that angle that he developed."

Tendulkar versus Steyn remains one of the game's greatest ever contests and a lifelong memory to cherish for anyone who saw the two amazing gentlemen try and outperform each other.

Home or away, it was always fierce and never one-sided.

"The only other guy who bowled very much like him was possibly James

Anderson," Tendulkar added. "Their wrist positions were similar. But Steyn had a more whippy action. He could go through the crease much faster."

"The swing that he consistently got at that pace was incredible. When he was at his peak, he was bowling close to 150kmph, so it wasn't that easy to handle. That's where he had mastered that art. When he wanted to be really quick, he could do so."

"I remember the spell that he bowled to me on the morning of the third Test in Cape Town [Tendulkar scored 146 in the first innings in January 2011]. Gautam [Gambhir, who scored 93] played Morne Morkel, and I played Steyn."

"For close to an hour, we couldn't rotate the strike at all. Whatever runs we scored, we scored in boundaries! That one hour, I can say, is one of the most thrilling, interesting and challenging hours that I've played in Test cricket. That was a decisive moment."

"I enjoyed my battles with him and congratulate him on a wonderful career," Tendulkar signed off.



## Anderson ruled out of 2nd Test

AFP, London

James Anderson has been ruled out of the second Ashes Test, with England uncertain when he will be fit to return after injuring his right calf.

England's record wicket-taker broke down after just four overs in the series opener at Edgbaston and did not bowl again as Australia romped to a 251-run victory.

Scans have confirmed he has no chance of taking part in next week's game at Lord's, the second of the five-match series, with assessment taking place "on an ongoing basis".

Anderson's absence is a huge blow for England, whose deflating defeat in Birmingham came just three weeks after they won the World Cup.

The veteran, who has taken 575 Test wickets, has not played competitive cricket for a month leading into the match after injuring the same calf playing for Lancashire.



JAMES ANDERSON

## Faf to lead SA in Tests against Ind

AFP, Johannesburg

Faf du Plessis will captain South Africa in the Test series against India in October but may not lead the side in all formats, Corrie van Zyl, Cricket South Africa's (CSA) new acting director of cricket said on Tuesday.

Van Zyl, who was appointed to the acting role following the weekend purge of head coach Otis Gibson and his coaching staff, said he would chair a selection meeting "in the next day-and-a-half" to discuss future strategy, which would include planning for the 2023 World Cup.

"Faf will be the captain of the Test team," said Van Zyl.

"But we need to look forward and we will talk about the white-ball strategy to 2023."

South Africa will play three Twenty20 Internationals in India next month ahead of the Test series, their first in the new world Test championship, which starts on October 2.

At Tuesday's press conference, Thabang Moreo, the chief executive of CSA, said he hoped the appointments in a new structure for the national team would be made before England start a tour of South Africa in December.

## WI post 146-6

AFP, Providence

West Indies totalled 146 for six batting first against India in the final fixture of the three-match T20 International series at the Guyana National Stadium on Tuesday.

India hold an unassailable 2-0 lead after victories in the back-to-back matches at the Central Broward Stadium in Florida last weekend.

**SCORES IN BRIEF**  
**WEST INDIES:** 146 for 6 in 20 overs (Pollard 58, Pooran 17, Powell 32 not out; Chahar 3-4, Saini 2-34)

AFP, Sydney



Australians basked in rediscovered pride in their cricketers Tuesday after Steve Smith inspired a thumping Ashes Test win over England, redeeming himself following a ball-tampering scandal that left the team in disgrace.

Smith, pilloried and banned for a year over the infamous 'Sandpaper-gate' affair, rose above taunts of "We saw you cry on the telly" with centuries in each innings before England crumbled to a 251-run defeat in Birmingham.

"It's a redemption story like no other, from Sandpaper-gate to standing up to England, in England," tweeted 7News Brisbane.

"The Miracle of Birmingham", trumpeted The Australian, as any lingering embarrassment from the tampering scandal more than 18 months ago evaporated.

Instead, attention turned to the "redemption" of Smith from a tearful press conference last year to his Test-defining innings which humbled England, just

## ‘The best problem-solver’

REUTERS, Birmingham



Justin Langer has hailed Steve Smith's ability to find a way out of even the toughest situation and says his performance against England in the first Ashes Test showed all the traits of a cricketing great.

With Australia struggling on 122-8 in the first innings, Smith guided his team out of trouble with a sensational 144.

Three days later he became only the fifth Australian to score successive centuries in an Ashes Test, his fluent 142 putting the visitors in control and helping them to a 251-run win over the hosts on Monday.

It was the first Test in 16 months for Smith, who was stripped of the captaincy and banned for a year after teammate Cameron Bancroft was caught on camera attempting to change the condition of the ball with sandpaper during a March 2018 Test in South Africa.



I said during the summer that Virat Kohli is the best player I have ever seen but that (Smith's centuries) is just another level.  
**JUSTIN LANGER**  
Australia coach

## Aus media revel in Smith redemption

AFP, Sydney



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weeks after they were crowned ODI world champions.

Nathan Lyon and Pat Cummins took all 10 wickets as England's second innings folded for 146, but it was the knocks of 144 and 142 by Smith that set up the victory and renewed comparisons with the great Donald Bradman.

At the start of the Test the Australians were mocked as "cry-babies" and endured taunts of "cheats and losers", but five days on they were winners, the Herald's Malcolm Knox noted.

Knox described the fidgety Smith's centuries as "pure cricket alchemy, turning base metals into gold". The net effect of the abuse by England fans "was to knit the Australians together" and bring out their best cricket, he wrote.

"Even as he received his player-of-the-match award, Steve Smith had to speak above the songs of the last desperates whose claim to fame was having seen him cry on the telly. He wasn't crying now."

News Corp. Australia's James Matthey

said the vocal Edgbaston crowd "wasn't able to provide the spark needed to overcome an Australian team welcoming the ball-tampering trio back into the fold".

Smith, David Warner and Cameron Bancroft were playing in their first Test together since receiving lengthy suspensions for their part in the sandpaper affair.

The Australian called Smith's performance "a redemption tale" and said he "brings to a dressing room a belief in bright sides and silver linings, if not unicorns and rainbows... Has any previous Australian team, it is also worth asking, been so leveraged to the fortunes of a single player?"

Former Australian captain Gregg Chappell, who had his own scandal in the past with the infamous underarm bowling to New Zealand in 1981, said Smith couldn't rest on his laurels.

"He's taken a huge stride towards that redemption," Chappell was quoted as saying. "The way forward for that redemption is to keep making runs."