



One-off ODI if Mash retires?

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) is thinking of organising a one-off ODI against Zimbabwe next month to give ODI captain Mashrafe Bin Mortaza a grand farewell.

Bangladesh will host Afghanistan for a solitary Test next month, which will be followed by a tri-nation T20I series involving Afghanistan and Zimbabwe.

It was learned that the BCB is planning to host a lone ODI against Zimbabwe either between the Test and tri-nation series or following the two series, but it will all depend on whether Mashrafe will retire, which the 35-year-old has still not communicated with the board.

According to a BCB source, hosting the game will cost the board a fair amount of money and arrangements cannot be made without Mashrafe's confirmation.

Mashrafe's retirement from international cricket has been a topic of discussion in the cricket fraternity over the past few months and the BCB is eager to give the beloved cricketer a proper send-off. Scheduling, however, was a challenge as Bangladesh had no ODIs till February next year, according to the Future Tours Programme.

"This involves a heavy financial investment. We will also need to find out if Zimbabwe will agree to play or not. If they do, then the board will have to have a budget of some Tk 60 lakh as there will be logistical and other expenses involved," said a top BCB official, who wished to remain anonymous, yesterday.

"But before anything we will need to have consent from Mashrafe. We cannot just move ahead, arranging the game and then find Mashrafe not willing to retire at the moment. The [BCB] president [Nazmul Hasan] is likely to speak to him about this today or tomorrow [Thursday]," he added.



Bangladesh women cricketers had their last gym session at the BCB Academy Gymnasium yesterday. The Tigresses will leave for a 10-day preparation camp in the Netherlands today ahead of the upcoming Women's T20 World Cup qualifiers in Scotland.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Coach to be named in a day or two: Yunus

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) is all set to appoint a new head coach, a position that has been vacant since the board parted ways with Steve Rhodes following a disappointing World Cup campaign in July.

The BCB officials conducted a tele-conference with a few probable candidates yesterday.

"Even today [Wednesday] we have talked over the phone with a few probable candidates for the head coach's post. We are confident that we will be able to disclose the name of a new head coach over the next one or two days," BCB's media committee chairman Jalal Yunus told The Daily Star yesterday.

There had been talk that former New Zealand head coach Mike Hesson was all set to become the Tigresses' new coach. However, although the board was keen to rope in the 44-year-old, according to sources close to developments there are very slim chances of Hesson, who is also one of the shortlisted candidates to be India's head coach, coming to Bangladesh.

Yunus, however, was not willing to make any comment on Hesson's current status but he did say that the attributes the board is looking for are strong vision and passion, along with the financial considerations.

Former South African coach Russell Domingo had visited the country for an interview with the BCB earlier this month, and board officials were satisfied with his plan and vision during the presentation.

Tigresses headed for Netherlands

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh women's cricket team will leave for the Netherlands today, where the Tigresses will have a 10-day preparation camp before travelling to Scotland to participate in the upcoming Women's World T20 qualifiers, set to begin on August 31.

Ahead of the stiff challenge, Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) women's cricket wing development manager Nazmul Abedin Fahim was hopeful of the Tigresses' chances.

"On paper, Bangladesh are the strongest team that will be participating in the qualifiers. Bangladesh ended comfortable champions in this tournament last time and I hope that they will be able to hold

onto the same position this time. Two teams will qualify and I hope Bangladesh are one of them," Fahim told The Daily Star yesterday.

Fahim also informed that Bangladesh will be playing a number of T20 practice matches to get prepared.

"We will be playing matches and have practice sessions over there [in the Netherlands]. The Thailand team is over there and we will be playing two practice matches against them and also one practice game with the Netherlands. We will also play a practice match against the Netherlands under-17 boys' team."

Bangladesh will miss out on the services of experienced all-rounder Rumana Ahmed as the 28-year-old was ruled out due to an injury. However, Fahim said that other players alongside new entrants

Murshida Khatun, Sobhana Mostary and Shaila Sharmin could step up.

Bangladesh's main concern has long been their batting, but Fahim was hopeful that the batters would be more consistent, while hailing the Tigresses' spin bowling department.

"Our main strength is in our bowling, especially our spin bowling. We have a very good spin bowling department and I think it is better than most sides in the world. Even in the last World T20, none of the teams were able to post high scores against us. We could not win matches as our batsmen failed. Most teams could score just above 100. We have a very good bowling attack, but if our batting department could become a bit more consistent, we can even win matches against better teams."

OVER THE HOLIDAYS

Women's cricket included in 2022 C'wealth Games

AGENCIES, Dubai

Ahead of the possible inclusion of cricket in the 2028 Olympics, scheduled to be held in Los Angeles, the women's game got a shot in the arm with the inclusion of cricket in the upcoming 2022 Commonwealth Games, to be hosted by Birmingham, United Kingdom.

This is the first time since 1998 that cricket will be a

part of the Commonwealth Games.

When the sport was last included during the Kuala Lumpur games in 1998, it was a men's event and South Africa clinched the gold medal, beating Australia in the final. While the games in Kuala Lumpur were played in the 50-over format, Birmingham will see eight teams participating in the Twenty20 format of the game.

Kohli hits 42nd ton, Gayle sets record



AFP, Port of Spain

Indian captain Virat Kohli ended a run of 10 matches without a century Sunday, setting the platform for his team's 59-run (DLS) victory over the West Indies in a rain-hit second ODI at Queen's Park Oval.

Kohli went a long way towards justifying his decision to bat first with a typically assertive innings of 120 off 125 deliveries, with 14 fours and four sixes adorning his 42nd ODI hundred as India totalled 279 for seven.

Set a revised target of 270 off 46 overs when rain interrupted play during their chase, West Indies were



on course at 179 for four in the 35th over but then crashed to 210 all out with four overs to spare as seamer Bhuvneshwar Kumar triggered the slide with figures of four for 31.

Kumar's first wicket was near the start of the innings when he removed Chris Gayle, the hard-hitting opener falling for just 11 although it was enough to take him past Brian Lara for the most runs in ODI cricket by a West Indian, a record which now stands at 10,409.

It was also Gayle's 300th ODI, making him the first West Indian to reach that landmark.



Sri Lankan spinner Akila Dananjaya celebrates after dismissing New Zealand's Henry Nicholls on the first day of the opening Test in Galle yesterday. PHOTO: ICC

Taylor rescues Kiwis

AFP, Galle

Ross Taylor hit an unbeaten half-century to keep New Zealand afloat after Sri Lanka spinner Akila Dananjaya claimed five wickets on a rain-hit day one of the first Test on Wednesday.

New Zealand were 203 for five, having recovered from 71-3 at lunch, when rain stopped play for the day in the final session in Galle with Taylor batting on 86.

Dananjaya claimed his fourth five-wicket haul, bowling with a remodelled action after being reported for a suspect action last year.

The mystery spinner took three early wickets including skipper Kane Williamson for nought before Taylor put on 100 runs for the fourth wicket with Henry Nicholls.

Dananjaya, who was overlooked for Tests in New Zealand, Australia and South Africa, trapped Nicholls for 42 to break the century stand and then got BJ Watling for one to make New Zealand slip further.

"There's no drastic change to my action. I needed to change a few things and with the help of spin bowling coach Piyal Wijetunga, I did the necessary changes," Dananjaya told reporters.

Taylor handled pace and spin with aplomb as he registered his 31st Test 50 and had no problems resisting Dananjaya, who mixed up his deliveries to outfox the batsmen.

Taylor registered the highest score by a Kiwi batsman in a Test match at Galle.

SCORES IN BRIEF
NEW ZEALAND: First innings 203 for 5 (Raval 33, Latham c Dickwella 30, Taylor 86 not out, Nicholls 42; Dananjaya 5-57)

Rain washes out 1st day

AFP, London

Rain prevented play on the first day of the second Ashes Test between England and Australia at Lord's on Wednesday.

When the match should have been getting underway at 11:00 am (1000 GMT), the square and pitch remained fully covered.

Further rain then meant hopes of any play in the first session soon disappeared, with the prospect of the players taking the field at all on Wednesday increasingly slim. Continued rain caused the day's play to be called off after what would have been the tea break.

Ashes-holders Australia lead the five-match series 1-0 after their 251-run win in the first Test at Edgbaston last week.

It is 18 years since Australia last won an Ashes series in England.

In 17 of the last 19 Ashes campaigns, the team that has led 1-0 has won the series.

The exceptions were in 1997 when Australia lost at Edgbaston, but won the six-match series 3-2 and 2005 when England lost at Lord's but won the five-Test series 2-1.

Selectors lost my number: Steyn

STAR SPORT DESK

South African fast-bowling great Dale Steyn expressed his annoyance at being left out of the T20I squad for the India tour in a sarcastic tweet on Tuesday, saying that the selectors 'obviously lost my number'.

South Africa's most successful wicket-taker in Test cricket announced his retirement from the longer version last week, but made himself available for the shorter formats.

Steyn replied to a tweet from journalist Neil Manthorp, who commented on the fact that Chris Morris had not made himself available for selection for the T20I squad.

"I did... Obviously lost my number in the reshuffling of the coaching staff," Steyn wrote, referring to the recent overhaul of the Proteas coaching staff.

Manthorp then jokingly suggested that the new selectors must be saving the all-time great for the

important matches.

"Apologies to [India skipper] Virat [Kohli] and a billion people for thinking they [are] not [important]," was Steyn's retort.

South Africa will play the first of three T20Is against India on September 15, which will be followed by three Tests and three ODIs.

6-wicket loss for U-19s

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh U-19 team suffered a six-wicket defeat against their Indian counterparts in the final of the tri-nation Under-19s tournament at the County Ground in Hove on Sunday, despite Mahmudul Hasan Joy's brilliant 109.

In a bid to support the Ruth Strauss Foundation for spreading awareness about lung cancer, the players of both England and Australia will be wearing red caps while their jersey numbers will also be written in the same colour during Day 2 of the second Ashes Test at Lord's.



PHOTO: ICC