



The Bangladesh women's cricket team, led by Salma Khatun (C), departed for the Netherlands to participate in a 10-day preparation camp ahead of the World T20 qualifiers in Scotland, which begins on August 31, yesterday.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Kiwis on level terms after Patel's 5

REUTERS, Galle



New Zealand spinner Ajaz Patel carved through Sri Lanka's top order and took five wickets to even the odds for the visitors after the second day of the opening Test in Galle on Thursday.

New Zealand were bowled out for 249 in the first session but Sri Lanka struggled to get going during Patel's spells and finished on 227-7, trailing by 22 runs.

Openers Dimuth Karunaratne and Lahiru Thirimanne patiently saw off the new ball attack of Trent Boult and Tim Southee before Patel was introduced as early as the 11th

over in spin-friendly conditions.

The Indian-born left-arm, who finished with 5-76, struck in his first over to have Thirimanne stumped. Karunaratne was next to go with a similar delivery that trapped him leg before with the score on 66-2.

Kusal Mendis and Angelo Mathews built a 77-run partnership for the third wicket before Mendis (53) was dismissed the very next ball after bringing up his 10th half-century just before tea.

After a middle-order collapse, where three batsmen added only six runs, wicketkeeper Niroshan Dickwella (39 not out) and Suranga Lakmal (28 not out) wrested back control with an unbeaten 66-run



AJAZ PATEL... 5 for 76

partnership to keep the test evenly poised.

Earlier Ross Taylor, unbeaten on 86 at stumps on Wednesday, fell to the very first delivery he faced, missing out on his 19th century

after edging fast bowler Lakmal to the wicketkeeper.

After Akila Dananjaya picked up five wickets on the first day, Lakmal (4-29) quickly cleaned up the tail.

The two-Test series, with the second match set for Colombo, is the first for both teams in the newly launched World Test Championship.

SCORES IN BRIEF
NEW ZEALAND: First innings 249 (Raval 33, Latham 30, Taylor 86, Nicholls 42; Lakmal 4-29, Dananjaya 5-80)

SRI LANKA: First innings 227 for 7 (Karunaratne 76, Mendis 53, Mathews 50, Dickwella 39 not out, Lakmal 28 not out; Patel 5-76)

Hazlewood double rocks England

AFP, London



Australia's Josh Hazlewood marked his entry into this season's Ashes with two early wickets before England held firm as the second Test finally got under way at Lord's on Thursday.

England were 76-2 at lunch on the second day, having been 26-2 after Hazlewood captured the wickets of Jason Roy and captain Joe Root.

But Rory Burns (34 not out) and Joe Denly (27 not out) prevented further collapse, with Hazlewood having the excellent figures of two wickets for 14 runs in 10 overs at lunch.

Australia, 1-0 up in the five-match series after a 251-run win in the first Test at Edgbaston last week, saw captain Tim Paine show faith in his attack by deciding to bowl first after winning the toss following Wednesday's opening day washout.

It took just nine balls for his decision to be rewarded.

After Pat Cummins had bowled a probing maiden to Rory Burns, Hazlewood -- recalled in place of James Pattinson in the only change to Australia's side -- struck with just his third ball when Roy was caught behind for a duck by wicketkeeper Paine after fending loosely outside off stump at a rising delivery.

England had now lost their first wicket without a run on the board.

Although the sun was breaking through the clouds, easing the conditions for batting,

that did not stop Australia's new-ball duo from repeatedly beating the outside edge of Root and left-hander Burns -- who scored his maiden Test century at Edgbaston.

But Root, England's best batsman, did hit the first boundaries of the match in when he cover drove two successive Cummins deliveries for textbook fours in the seventh over.

And when first-change Peter Siddler replaced Cummins, England took 13 runs off his first over including three well-struck boundaries.

But Hazlewood then had Root, aiming across his front pad, lbw for 14 with a ball that nipped back.

Root thought about a review but decided against, with England now 26-2 as the under pressure Denly walked out to bat.

England should have been 40-3 but Burns, on 16, saw Usman Khawaja drop a routine gully chance from an edge drive off Siddler.

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

Wednesday's washout saw play extended to 98 overs per day, with the follow-on reduced to within 150 runs rather than 200 now this is a four-day match.

On the last two occasions that an entire day's play has been lost in a Lord's Test (first day, 2001 v Pakistan and first day, 2018 v India), the match was still over within four days.

SCORES IN BRIEF
ENGLAND: First innings 76 for 2 at lunch (Burns 34 not out, Denly 27 not out; Hazlewood 2-14)



Australia pacer Josh Hazlewood celebrates after taking the wicket of England captain Joe Root during the second day of the second Ashes Test at Lord's in London yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Aleem equals Bucknor's record

AGENCIES, London

Aleem Dar on Thursday equalled Steve Bucknor's record of officiating in the highest number Test matches after taking the field for the 128th time during the second Ashes Test between England and Australia at Lord's.

"It's a great honour to equal the number of Test matches of my role model, umpire Steve Bucknor," Dar, 51, was quoted as saying by the International Cricket Council in a tweet.

Dar made his Test debut in a match between Bangladesh and England in Dhaka in October 2003. He has since then taken charge of 376 matches across all formats.

Besides Dar and Bucknor, South Africa's Rudi Koertzen is the only other umpire to have reached the three-figure mark in Tests, having stood in 108 Tests before calling it a day in 2010.

Experience counts: Kohli

ICC



India captain Virat Kohli took pride in his 43th one-day international hundred, which sealed a 2-0 series win for his side against West Indies.

Kohli's 114* off 99 balls helped India chase down a DLS-adjusted target of 255 off 35 overs after West Indies posted 240/7 in their 35 overs. It was his second hundred in a row, and an incredible 26th while chasing.

"I've been around for a while," the captain explained. "Experience counts in pressure situations, understanding where the team is heading and what I need to do for the tempo of the game."

"You want to take pride in stepping up for the team as much as you can, and I definitely take a lot of pride in that. So yes, two good games with the bat from me, but, more importantly, we got the result because of my contribution. That feels much better."

Kohli admitted to some nerves in the camp when the match was interrupted by rain. Chris Gayle and Evin Lewis had given the West Indies a blazing start, reminding the Indians why they were rated as "two of the most dangerous players in the world in white-ball cricket". "We tried literally everything, we bowled every ball possible," said Kohli. "That was tremendous batting by them."



Being 92/3 in their reply did little to steady the team's nerves. However, Shreyas Iyer then came together with Kohli to add 120 for the fourth wicket. It was Iyer's second half-century in the series, doing his case to be a regular in the side no harm -- and Kohli said as much.

"Shreyas has come along really well," he said, all praise for the 24-year-old. "He's stepped in and played with confidence. That augers well for the team. He's presented a strong case for himself ... to be a regular feature in the middle order."

"He wasn't intimidated at all, he was confident, very sure of his game."

That's great to see, and hopefully he builds on to this and keeps performing for the team."

In what will come as high praise indeed, Kohli said the youngster's attitude reminded him of himself when he was starting out. "You need to stack up performances and play well under pressure," Kohli said. "I was exactly the same when I came in -- any opportunity I got I wanted to win games for my team. You have taken risks. He was brave under pressure. You need to reveal your game, you need to realise who you are, what your game is, what kind of player you are, so he's heading in the right direction."

New faces for home series?

SPORTS REPORTER



There has long been talk of bleeding youngsters in the Bangladesh team for the long-term benefit and a stable management plan for the nation's cricket team.

Now, it seems the chances of seeing some new faces in the upcoming one-off home Test against Afghanistan and a tri-nation T20I series featuring hosts Bangladesh, Afghanistan and Zimbabwe have increased as chief selector Minhajul Abedin hinted yesterday that they would be looking to blood some youngsters in the two series.

Star opener Tamim Iqbal had asked for a break from the two series and the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) granted the request, further making the upcoming series the perfect opportunity to experiment and unearth future prospects.

"We had selected 36 players in the preliminary squad for the upcoming Test series against Afghanistan and the tri-nation series after that. After Tamim had asked for a break, we now a list of 35 players that we submitted to the board we will select the final squad for the upcoming series from that list," Minhajul to The Daily Star yesterday.

Tamim has been going through a lean patch as the left-hander carried his indifferent form from the World Cup in England that ended in July to the recently concluded three-match ODI series in Sri Lanka, where he could muster just 21 runs after being named the stand-in captain for the tour.

"When a player wants a break, you have to respect that. He must have some fatigue and some plan to overcome that, so you have to respect it. So far no other player has asked for a break."

In that, there may be a clue that Test and T20I skipper Shakib Al Hasan -- who had asked for and been granted a break from the Sri Lanka ODIs -- is likely to take the reins for the two series. Shakib returned to the country yesterday after performing Hajj.

The selectors have often opted for players who are past their prime with little left to offer when naming some last-minute replacements for regular players. 29-year-old pacer Shafiqul Islam and 33-year-old all-rounder Forhad Reza were the most recent examples during the ODI series in Sri Lanka. Reza was included as Mashrafe Bin Mortaza's

replacement while Shafiqul was flown in to get some depth in the pace department. In the immediate aftermath of a disappointing World Cup campaign, it was thought that the series in Sri Lanka would have been the time to look to the future.

However, according to the chief selector, they may give the nod to a few new faces this time around.

"He [Tamim] is a proven player, so the absence of such a player will create opportunities for others. We have some promising candidates in HP [High Performance], so let's see what we can do with the upcoming players in this series," said chief selector Minhajul when asked about replacement options for Tamim.

This is the first time that the left-hander will miss a series for a reason other than injury. Bangladesh, who played just seven Tests without Tamim since his debut in January



With Tamim Iqbal being granted a break from the upcoming home series, it remains to be seen who partners promising rookie opener Shadman Islam (L) in the one-off Test against Afghanistan next month.

2008, have used seven different openers but could only see a highest opening stand of 56 between Liton Das and Imrul Kayes in a Test against Zimbabwe in 2018.

Rookie opener Shadman Islam has impressed in three Tests so far, and it remains to be seen whether his partner at the top is a new name, or indeed if the selectors bite the bullet and offer a glimpse into the next generation.

I didn't announce any retirement: Gayle

ICC



The third one-day international between West Indies and India felt like a farewell for Chris Gayle, but the star opener suggested after the game that he wasn't quite done yet.

Gayle played the match at Port of Spain on Tuesday, with a special '301' jersey -- the shirt number indicating the number of ODIs he has featured in throughout his career, a record for any cricketer from the West Indies.

In the previous match, he had gone past Brian Lara's record ODI runs for West Indies, but had tallied just a scratchy 15 in the first two matches of the series. On Tuesday too, he began with a maiden over, before going on to entertain the crowd with vintage Gayle striking. He launched into Mohammed Shami



with a six in the second over off a free hit and went on to post 114 in 10 overs with Evin Lewis.

Gayle's contribution was 72 in 41 balls, with 62 of those coming in boundaries. Caught by Virat Kohli off the bowling of Khaleel Ahmed, the Jamaican was applauded by the opposition players as he walked off.

He raised his bat, helmet perched on top of it in his now typical style, and the crowd continued to cheer, wondering if it was the last time they'd see him in an ODI.

But, Gayle dismissed suggestions that this was a farewell game. "I didn't announce any retirement," he said in a short video posted by Cricket West Indies, insisting that he would be around "until further notice".

"To my knowledge, he hasn't retired," added Jason Holder, the captain, after the game. "But today was an example of his career. The knock he played was outstanding. He got us off to a really good start. He was entertaining, he showed presence, and that's just what people have come to expect of Chris Gayle over the years."

Kohli, unaware of Gayle's plans, paid tribute to his long-time

teammate at the Indian Premier League. "I would like to congratulate him for a great, great career playing for West Indies," the Indian captain said. "He has done so much for West Indies cricket, and he is an icon all over the world."

"[He is] one of the nicest human beings around. That to me is his nicest quality. Everyone knows about his cricket, but I think the kind of person he is, so helpful with youngsters and so fun-loving and always smiling -- even in the most [high] pressure situations he is always smiling."

"For me, Chris Gayle the person is the best part of him. The cricket everyone knows, [but] I have been fortunate enough to spend a lot of time with him as a friend and get to know him as a person. He is a gem of a human being. I think he can be really proud of that, firstly."