



Spinner Mehedi Hasan Miraz became the fastest and the youngest Bangladesh bowler to have scalped 100 Test wickets on Day 3 of the second and final Test against the West Indies in Mirpur yesterday. Mehedi, aged 23 and playing in his 24th Test, achieved the feat when he removed Shayne Moseley. He surpassed Taijul Islam in terms of being the quickest to the feat. Taijul had achieved the feat in his 25th Test. Mehedi also surpassed Shakib Al Hasan in terms of being the youngest to achieve the feat. Shakib had reached the landmark at the age of 25 and while playing in his 28th Test. The young off-spinner became the fourth Bangladeshi bowler to take 100 Test wickets after Mohammad Rafique, Shakib and Taijul.



Bangladesh batsman Mushfiqur Rahim unnecessarily goes for a reverse sweep against a short-of-a-length delivery from West Indies spinner Rahkeem Cornwall only to find Kyle Mayers at short cover during the third day of the second Test at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Windies buoyed, Tigers cautious

SPORTS REPORTER



The fourth day of the second Test between Bangladesh and West Indies has potential to be the most important day of the game, with both sides looking to cash in on opportunities to swing the match in their favour.

Bangladesh were bundled out for 296 in their first innings, handing the visitors a 113-run lead. But the West Indies also find themselves in a spot of bother after falling to 41 for three at the end of the first day. Despite that, the visitors are in the driving seat with a 154-run lead in their second essay with two more days to go.

Rahkeem Cornwall, who scalped his second five-wicket haul in Test cricket, said that they were eying a target of around 400 runs.

"I think we are slightly in the driver's seat. Tomorrow is an important day for us. We just have to bat well in the first hour. We have to be in a reasonable position at lunch so that we can set a reasonable target for Bangladesh. We can have a run at Bangladesh at the end (of the day). Anything over 400 will be comfortable for us," Cornwall said.

The big man, who has been devastating

with the ball and was instrumental in bundling Bangladesh out below 300, added that his patience had been the key to the success.

"The plan was to keep things simple, be patient, and put balls in the right areas. I think the way our batsmen set up the game the day before, we knew that the bowlers had to do a good job today. The ball bounces a bit more in Dhaka. There was not much bounce or spin in Chattogram. I got a bit more purchase here. I work with what I get. Whatever pace I get out of the wicket, I use it as my strength," he said.

On the other hand, off-spinner Mehedi Hasan Miraz -- who became the quickest Bangladeshi to 100 Test wickets yesterday -- informed that it would be a difficult task even if Bangladesh managed to pack up the visitors below 200 runs.

"It will be difficult to score runs, especially on the fifth day after coming into bat in the fourth innings. Maybe it was easy to bat in the first innings, but that will change in the second innings. Our main goal is to dismiss them early and I think if our bowlers can bundle them out between 150-200 then there might be a chance for us. But it will be difficult to chase a target around 300. However, I believe that the presence of the senior players in the side can help us and anything can happen in cricket."



West Indies spinner Rahkeem Cornwall, who earned his second Test five-wicket haul, celebrates the wicket of Liton Das (not in pic) while non-strike batsman Mehedi Hasan Miraz looks on during the third day of the second Test in Mirpur yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

All to do for Tigers

SPORTS REPORTER



Bangladesh staged a fightback in the last session of the third day, picking up three wickets as the West Indies ended the day on 49 for three in their second innings. However, the hosts are still on the back foot in the second and final Test as the visitors have taken a lead of 154 runs at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

Nayeem Hasan, Mehedi Hasan Miraz and Taijul Islam picked up a wicket each to dismiss the top three West Indies batsmen in quick succession in the final hour of the day. Miraz removed Shayne Moseley to become the youngest and fastest Bangladeshi bowler to 100 Test wickets in his 24th game.

Earlier, Bangladesh were bundled out for 296 in their first innings, giving the hosts a healthy 113-run first-innings lead. Once again, the Tigers seemed to

SCORES IN BRIEF

West Indies: First innings-409 all out and Second innings-41 for 3 in 21 overs (Brathwaite 6, Campbell 18, Moseley 7, Bonner 8 not out, Warrican 2 not out; Taijul 1-13, Nayeem 1-14, Miraz 1-14)

Bangladesh: First innings-296 all out in 96.5 overs (Tamim 44, Mominul 21, Mushfiqur 54, Mithun 15, Liton 71, Miraz 57, Taijul 13 not out, extras 16; Gabriel 3-70, Cornwall 5-74, Joseph 2-60)

have muddled their approach when they resumed the third day on 105 for four in their first innings in reply to a huge 409 from the West Indies.

Off-spinner Rahkeem Cornwall was the pick of the visiting bowlers, bagging his second five-wicket haul to bundle out Bangladesh below the 300 mark.

Both overnight batsmen -- Mohammad Mithun and Mushfiqur Rahim -- managed to negotiate a barrage of bouncers from Shannon Gabriel for the first

30 minutes. But just when the pair looked settled enough to put on a big partnership, Mithun mistimed a flick off Cornwall to short mid-wicket after facing 86 ball for 15 runs, ending the fifth-wicket stand at 72.

At the other end, Mushfiqur remained solid and reached his 22nd fifty while doing his best to unsettle Cornwall. The experienced batsman was living dangerously and survived two close calls, including a tight leg-before decision when Mushfiqur was hit on his back leg while attempting to sweep Cornwall.

Mushfiqur had a brain fade soon after, going for a reverse sweep when his side needed 55 runs to avoid the follow-on. That shot came off the toe-end of his bat and he departed for 54, handing a simple catch to cover off Cornwall's bowling. Bangladesh were left on 155 for six inside the first session.

The hosts' best time with the bat in the entire series so far probably came when

Mehedi Hasan Miraz joined Liton Das for the seventh wicket. The pair ensured that Bangladesh would see out the second session without losing a wicket and both got to their fifties. Bangladesh took tea on 272 for six after the batsmen showed the patience and authority that others were missing.

However, things changed dramatically in the third session as Bangladesh adopted an over-aggressive approach which backfired and cost them their last four wickets for just 15 runs.

Liton, on 71, went for a paddle sweep and only managed to get an inside edge that ricocheted off his back leg and into the slip fielder's hand, giving Cornwall his fourth wicket. Miraz followed soon after, departing for 57 after handing a simple catch to cover off the bowling of Gabriel following a verbal battle with the pacer.

Cornwall then scalped Nayeem to register his fifer and ended up with figures of five for 74 from 32 overs.



Razzak, Nafees announce retirement

SPORTS REPORTER

Former Bangladesh opener Shahriar Nafees and left-arm spinner Abdur Razzak announced their retirement from all forms of cricket yesterday.

The duo announced their retirement in a simple ceremony, organised by the Cricketers Welfare Association of Bangladesh (CWAB) and Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB), during the lunch break of the second Test between Bangladesh and West Indies. They were presented with crests during the event.

The cricketers will, however, remain part of Bangladesh cricket as both have joined the BCB in separate roles. Razzak has been named as the third member of the national selection panel while Nafees has taken up a position in the board's cricket operations department.

Razzak played his last international game against Sri Lanka in Mirpur in 2018, which was an international comeback for him at the age of 35 following a four-year gap.

Nafees, who made his international debut back in 2005, played his last game for Bangladesh in 2013 but continued playing domestic cricket before finally calling it a day.

Refereeing in focus as Kings survive Sheikh Jamal scare

SPORTS REPORTER



League leaders B a s h u n d h a r a Kings dropped their first points of the Bangladesh Premier League season yesterday, but they could consider themselves extremely lucky to have come out with a point in controversial circumstances in a goalless draw against title-challengers Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club at the Bangabandhu National Stadium.

The defending champions, who won all seven of their previous matches comfortably, came up against a Sheikh Jamal side determined to stop them in their tracks. The latter almost came up with a crucial victory, but for a disallowed goal right at the end of the match.

The match had very little goalmouth action, with neither side managing to effectively breach the other's defence. The one occasion that Sheikh Jamal thought they had successfully done that was when veteran winger Zahid Hossain, on as a second-half substitute, threaded a brilliant through ball for

a galloping Pa Omar Jobe.

The Gambian forward, who has already scored eight times in the league, showed his composure as he wriggled past Kings defender Topu Barman before placing the ball at the far corner of the net past a diving Anisur Rahman at Kings goal.

Just as Jobe ran off to celebrate the goal -- a potential winner on 88 minutes, the referee blew his whistle, judging Jobe to have fouled Topu even as the assistant referee made no notion of any infringement.

This was a top-of-the-table clash and a lot was riding on the result, and understandably the Sheikh Jamal players and officials were furious at the decision.

"If there was any foul there, it should have been Topu committing the foul. The assistant referee, who had clear sight of the incident, pointed to a goal while the referee, who had his back to the incident, gave it as a foul," Sheikh Jamal coach Shafiqul Islam Manik told reporters after the match.

"Referees do make mistakes, but I think this one was intentional. We have a team worthy of fighting for the title but these types of decisions will surely have an impact on the race."

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Later Manik appeared at the press box with the club officials and read out a statement, saying that they would appeal against the decision and the overall standard of refereeing, reiterating that

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SHAFIQU L ISLAM MANIK
SHEIKH JAMAL COACH

this particular decision was to undermine them in the title-race.

This was not the first time, though, that refereeing has been put on the dock during this league, with Bashundhara Kings having the rub of the green on more than one occasion, according to some coaches and officials.

While the result kept Kings firmly

on top with 22 points from eight matches, Sheikh Jamal slipped to third position with 17 points from seven matches.

ABAHANI THE BIG GAINERS
The big beneficiaries of the result were six-time champions Abahani, who made up for some lost ground with a 4-0 win over Arambagh KS at the Birshreshtha Matri Rahman Stadium in Munshiganj.

Francisco Torres scored twice in the first half before Masih Saighani and Dipok Roy scored two goals as the Sky Blues moved to second position with 18 points from eight matches, keeping Arambagh rooted at the bottom without a point from seven matches.

SAIF BEAT RUSSEL 2-1
Saif Sporting Club came from a goal down to beat Sheikh Russel 2-1 in the day's third match at the BNS.

Mohammad Abdullah had given Russel the lead in the 20th minute, but second-half goals from Riyadul Hasan Rafi and Sirojiuddin Rakhmatullaev helped Saif to a much-needed win, moving them to 13 points from seven matches in fifth position while Russel remained just above them with 16 points from eight matches.

Nadal eases past Norrie

REUTERS, Melbourne

Second seed Rafa Nadal overcame some stiff early resistance from Britain's Cameron Norrie before easing into the fourth round of the Australian Open with a 7-5, 6-2, 7-5 victory yesterday.

After being heckled by a loud-mouthed fan in his previous round win against Michael Mmoh, Nadal enjoyed an incident-free evening in an empty Rod Laver Arena to reach the round of 16 at a Grand Slam for the 49th time in his career.

The 34-year-old Nadal, bidding to claim a record 21st Grand Slam title, will face Italian Fabio Fognini next.

"I'm happy, I had a few



good feelings, of course I have to keep improving and tomorrow is another day to practice but into the second week and that's the main thing for me," said Nadal.

Meanwhile, fans waited to hear yesterday if Novak Djokovic will be fit to play today.

Djokovic suffered a muscle tear in his third-round, five-set epic against Taylor Fritz, and the world number one skipped practice on Saturday in a bid to recover in time to resume his quest for a record-extending ninth title at Melbourne Park.

'350 will be a pretty good score'

REUTERS

Opener Rohit Sharma smashed 161 while India's other top-order batsmen fell cheaply, helping the home side build to 300-6 on the opening day of the second Test against England at Chennai's MA Chidambaram Stadium yesterday.

At 86-3, India looked to have thrown away any chance of batting themselves into a strong position on a pitch where runs are going to be harder to come by as the match progresses. But Rohit's 162-run



partnership with Ajinkya Rahane dragged the hosts back into the contest, before England dismissed both in the final session. "On this wicket, 350 will be a pretty good score. We still have four wickets and I'm sure they'd try to bat as long as possible," Rohit told a video conference. "I'm little disappointed to get out like that but happy that the team is in a good position."

After the opening Test was played behind closed doors, 15,000 fans were allowed back in the stadium, and Rohit gave them plenty to cheer about.



Pitch Foundation, an organization providing assistance to individuals related to cricket, was launched at the her-e-Bangla National Stadium yesterday. Shaheed Sheikh Kamal, Dr Mazaharul Islam Damal, Chand Khan, Bazlur Rashid, Muhammad Quamaruzzaman, MA Latif, Shamin Kabir, Muzaffar Hossain, Syed Abdul Ahad Junu and Abdul Hadi Ratan were honored during the ceremony for their respective contribution to the game.

PHOTO: STAR