

Soumya fluffs another chance

SPORTS REPORTER

After Bangladesh managed to secure the five-match T20I series against Australia with two games in hand, it was expected that the hosts would make some changes to the team to test and test their depth in the fourth game. Instead, the Tigers went for the will and kept the winning combination intact.

However, one area that most assumed Bangladesh would need to change was in one of the opening slots, with Soumya Sarkar looking no way near to his best.

The idea from the team

Sheikh and Soumya, could lay a stable foundation, but the latter failed to make an impact yet again.

Soumya looked to have no control as he went to pull Josh Hazlewood and ended up edging the ball to cover. The 28-year-old had a good outing in Zimbabwe with two fifties in three games and also ended as the player of the series, but Soumya simply could not continue that fine run against the Aussies.

In fact, he showed a clear lack of composure when asked to face a superior bowling attack against the Aussies. The manner of his dismissals in the three previous T20Is saw his questionable approach come under a magnifying

SCORES IN BRIEF

BANGLADESH

104 for 9 in 20 overs (Naim 28, Shakib 15, Afrif 20, Mahedi 23, extras 5; Hazlewood 2-24, Agar 1-22, Tye 3-18, Swepson 3-12)

AUSTRALIA

105 for 7 in 19 overs (Christian 39, Marsh 11, Agar 27, extras 3; Mahedi 2-17, Shakib 0-50, Nasum 1-17, Mustafizur 2-9, Shoriful 1-8)

Result: Australia won by three wickets.

Player-of-the-match: Mitchell Swepson.

ball onto his stumps after scoring two runs off one ball.

His dismissal in the second game was even worse. He went for a big cross-batted heave facing just his second delivery of the innings from Mitchell Starc, who fired in a fuller length delivery, and was bowled for a duck.

Soumya was caught plumb in front in the third T20I while going after a rather fuller delivery from leg spinner Adam Zampa. He had faced 11 deliveries and made two.

Despite the Tigers finding a lot of positives from the series so far, Soumya's lack of form and approach remain the biggest area of concern for Bangladesh as they move ahead.

glass.

He made an ugly decision as an opener in the first T20I when he tried to make room for Hazlewood and ended up only dragging the



Mystique around Mustafizur continues to grow

KHALID HOSSAIN

Mustafizur Rahman may have gone wicketless in the third T20I between Bangladesh and Australia on Friday, but the wily left-arm pacer was the player that took control of the most important stage of the game.

With Australia requiring 24 runs from 12 balls with 7 wickets in hand, Mustafizur single-handedly ended up deciding the outcome of the match by pulling off a one-run over.

The Fizz was equally impactful in yesterday's fourth T20I, with Australia chasing a meagre 104. His first over yielded a wicket maiden, while he gave away just two runs in his second over.

"Mustafiz's spell today [Friday] was as impactful as a five-wicket haul, if not more. Especially the way he bowled his last over, giving only one run away and bowling five dots. That mattered a lot," skipper Mahmudullah Riyad said after a third consecutive T20I win against Australia sealed the five-match series 3-0.

Mahmudullah's words might make one ponder whether statistics should include more variables to provide a better perception of performances as impactful as Mustafizur's in the third game.

Can his spell and its impact be quantified with trivial stats like 'number of wickets taken', 'economy rate' or 'strike rate'? How do we quantitatively measure, or at least approximate, the impact of Fizz's flurry of dot deliveries, that too in the 19th over?

Cricket is, more often than not, a game of partnerships. However, when we think of partnerships, the batting side of things grabs our attention. The impact of bowlers, bowling in tandem, from two ends, remains largely underrated.

Much like a football playmaker like Lionel Messi, whose scores and assists cannot alone justify the impact he has had on a game. Since we are talking about team games, how one player affects the "measurable" success of teammates -- what further statistical variable can be integrated in cricketing analysis -- could be food for thought.

One such variable could be the bowler's assist, in the spirit of football. With wickets tally and run-rate, it would

be interesting to see who had bowled the previous over that led to the fall of a wicket.

Coming back to the third-game of the series, Mustafizur's second over, Bangladesh 13th, saw him bowl five dot balls in succession to an in-form Mitchell Marsh. That created pressure and brought success for Shakib the following over. Mustafizur's third over, the 17th of the innings, cost just four runs and Shoriful claimed the prized wicket of Mitchell Marsh the following over.

These two 'assists' definitely led to the dismissal of two of the best Aussie batsmen in the context of the game. Australia ended up with six wickets in hand but unfortunately for them, they were 10 runs short of their target at the game's conclusion. Again, those two 'assists' can be argued to have had more impact than two wickets in an average game.

He has been the source of Australia's biggest headache on tour. After all, three of their recent innings against Bangladesh happen to be Australia's top-ten lowest-ever scores in T20I history. They have played 144 games in total.

However, following the second game, the Aussies demonstrated praiseworthy sporting attitude, fit for a successful cricketing nation, when they spoke about Mustafizur. Ashton Agar urged aspiring Australian cricketers to observe Mustafizur, someone the likes of whom 'they didn't see before in Australia'. Moises Henriques, told Australia media: "I think he bowled 23 slower balls. The amount of revolutions he gets even on a good wicket, is hard to play, let alone on something like that."

Prior to the series, the Aussies would probably not have banked on the Fizz to be this lethal or this intimidating, bordering unplayable at times. Instead of having a clear idea of how to negotiate his deliveries with relative ease, the men from Down Under entangled themselves in a further web of confusion.

Former Bangladesh skipper Mashrafe Bin Mortaza, under whom Mustafizur made his international debut, summed up the jubilant feelings of Bangladesh fans on Facebook, writing: "First-ever series win against Australia! What a spell, 'Fizz'! 7 dots in his last 12 deliveries! Unbelievable!"

"It was always difficult to chase, but we didn't assess the wicket well enough batting first. It was a 120-target wicket. Having said that bowlers did a good job to take it to the 19th over. But as batters we need to be cautious and sensible."

MAHMUDULLAH RIYAD

management to include Soumya for the fourth T20I despite his scores of 2, 0, and 2 in the first three games was supposed to give the left-hander assurance and confidence. But unfortunately, Soumya failed to grab that chance for the fourth consecutive time.

The left-hander once again lacked confidence and was tentative right from the start against off-spinner Ashton Turner. And although he struck a six to him the next over, he had his heart in his mouth at one point when his chip went just narrowly past the fielder at long-off.

The team management would hope that both openers, Naim

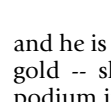


Bangladesh opener Soumya Sarkar walks back to the pavilion after making only 8 runs. Bangladesh batsmen cut forlorn figures, scoring only 104 for nine in 20 overs, to suffer a three-wicket defeat against Australia in the fourth T20I of the five-match series in Mirpur yesterday.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Neeraj creates history for India

REUTERS, Tokyo



Neeraj Chopra won the men's javelin on Saturday with a best throw of 87.58 metres to claim a historic first Olympic athletics gold medal for India.

Neeraj created history by becoming the first Indian to win an athletics gold medal at the Olympics by winning the men's javelin throw and he is only the second Indian ever to win an individual gold -- shooter Abhinav Bindra finished on top of the podium in 2008.

The Czech Republic's Jakub Vadlejch won silver with 86.67 metres and Vitezslav Vesely claimed the bronze with 85.44.

Chopra, the 2018 Commonwealth champion, seized the lead with a throw of 87.03 on his first attempt, a distance no other competitor achieved during the final, winning India's first gold of the Tokyo Games as his overjoyed team mates and coaches watched from the stands.

With medals assured, Vadlejch and Vesely attempted to reach the top of the podium on their final throws but each fouled. Chopra became only the second Indian to win an individual Olympic gold medal after Abhinav Bindra.

"Your performance has further elevated what has been evident throughout the Games - that our athletes are not only capable of going toe to toe with the best, but are firmly establishing ourselves as the favorites," Bindra, who won the 10-metre air rifle event at the 2008 Games, wrote on Twitter. "Our first individual Gold might have taken over a century to come, but the comparatively minuscule time taken for you to bring home the second is a solid indication that we, as a sporting nation, are on the rise."

OLYMPICS MEDALS TABLE (TOP FIVE)				
COUNTRY	GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE	TOTAL
China	38	31	18	87
USA	36	39	33	108
Japan	27	12	17	56
ROC	20	25	23	68
G. Britain	20	21	22	63



BRAZIL RETAIN OLYMPIC FOOTBALL TITLE

Brazil retained their Olympic football title with substitute Malcolm scoring an extra-time winner in a 2-1 victory over Spain in Saturday's men's gold medal game. After the game ended 1-1 following normal time, Malcolm raced onto a diagonal ball from Antony and got the better of the hesitant Jesus Vallejo before driving the winner into the far corner to clinch gold for Brazil after their Rio 2016 triumph.

PHOTO: REUTERS



Israel's Linoy Ashram won the individual all-around rhythmic gymnastics gold medal on Saturday, breaking a Russian stranglehold on the Olympic title that stretched back to 2000. The Israeli ended the competition with 107.800 points, narrowly beating three-time all-around world champion Russian twins Dina and Arina Averina, who took the silver with 107.650. Belarus' Aina Harnasko bagged bronze with 102.700.

PHOTO: REUTERS



England captain Joe Root hit his 21st Test century during the penultimate day of the opening Test against India yesterday. Root made 109 as England scored 281 for 7 in 82 overs.

PHOTO: REUTERS

বার্ষিক সাধারণ সভা-২০২১

সূত্র নং-বিসিবি / এজিএম-২০২১ / ৪৬১ তারিখ : ০৮ই আগস্ট, ২০২১

এতদ্বারা বাংলাদেশ ক্রিকেট বোর্ডের সম্মানিত কাউন্সিলরবৃন্দের সদয় অবগতির জন্য জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, বর্তমান কোভিড-১৯ মহামারি পরিস্থিতিতে গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার কর্তৃক কঠোর লকডাউন-এর সিদ্ধান্তের কারণে গত ০৭ই জুলাই, ২০২১ তারিখের স্থগিত হওয়া বাংলাদেশ ক্রিকেট বোর্ডের বার্ষিক সাধারণ সভা-২০২১ নির্ধারিত তারিখ, সময় ও স্থানে অনুষ্ঠিত হবে :

দিন ও তারিখ : বৃহস্পতিবার, ২৬শে আগস্ট, ২০২১।
সময় : দুপুর ১২ঃ০০ ঘটিকা।
স্থান : গ্যাব বরকম, রেভিন্স নতুন ঢাকা ওয়াটার গার্ডেন, এয়ারপোর্ট রোড, ঢাকা।

উক্ত সভায় সাধারণ পরিষদের সকল সম্মানিত সদস্যদেরকে (কাউন্সিলর) উপস্থিত থাকার জন্য বিনীতভাবে অনুরোধ জানাচ্ছি।

পরিচালনা পরিষদের নির্দেশক্রমে -
প্রধান নির্বাহী কর্মকর্তা
বাংলাদেশ ক্রিকেট বোর্ড