



Kagiso Rabada was the destroyer in chief as his five-wicket haul helped South Africa thrash Bangladesh in the second ODI in Johannesburg yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Tigers crumble to PACE THREAT

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After the first wicket where it hit a crack and reared up, we felt we were in. In the recent past, Wanderers has given extra bounce with the new ball and not much thereafter but there was variable bounce today. With the ball gripping, our seamers did well to utilise it.

Kagiso Rabada



SPORTS REPORTER

South Africa came back into the three-match ODI series courtesy of a fiery fast-bowling display spearheaded by Kagiso Rabada that restricted Bangladesh to a paltry 194 for nine in the second ODI at Johannesburg yesterday.

The 26-year-old returned figures of five for 39 from his ten overs for his second five-wicket haul. Interestingly, both of Rabada's ODI fifiers have come against Bangladesh. He scalped his maiden five-wicket haul on debut against Bangladesh back in 2015.

Following a first-ever defeat at home against Bangladesh in the first ODI, the hosts put on a ruthless display in the crucial series-saving encounter and stamped their authority with a comprehensive seven-wicket win to level the series 1-1.

Credit must go to the Proteas pacers, who utilised the extra bounce on the surface at the Wanderers to great effect, repeatedly testing the Tigers after Tamim Iqbal elected to bat.

Rabada was instrumental, picking up three wickets in his first spell, while Lungi Ngidi dismissed skipper Tamim. Wayne Parnell also bagged a wicket as the Tigers were tottering on 34 for five inside 13 overs.

Curiously, the conservative approach from openers Tamim and Liton Das in the first ODI that saw them negotiate the initial pace and bounce and cautiously add 94 runs to lay a platform for a big total was missing yesterday.

Birthday boy Tamim was the first to depart to a nasty Ngidi delivery. The left-



SCORES IN BRIEF

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| Bangladesh: 194 for 9 in 50 overs (Afif 72, Miraz 38, Mahmudullah 25; Rabada 5-39, Ngidi 1-34) |
| South Africa: 195 for 3 in 37.2 overs (De Kock 62, Verreynne 58 not out; Shakib 1-33, Afif 1-15, Miraz 1-56) |
| Result: South Africa won by 7 wickets. |
| Player-of-the-match: Kagiso Rabada. |

hander came forward but the ball kicked off the surface and hit him in the thumb, which resulted in a simple catch at point.

After that, it was an exhibition of fierce fast bowling by Rabada. The right-arm seamer completely undid Shakib Al Hasan, man of the match in the previous game, without troubling the scorers.

The left-hander tried to flick a length delivery from Rabada but with the extra bounce on offer, the ball moved away as Shakib closed the face of the bat a bit early

and gave away a leading edge.

Liton Das, was the only Bangladesh batter who could blame poor shot selection. Despite looking solid in his brief stay, the right hander decided to play an uppercut close to his body and was caught behind after scoring 15.

In his seventh over, Rabada got the better of Yasir Ali with a short-pitched delivery angled towards the batsman's body. The right-hander tried to move away but in the process handed a top-edge to point after scoring two.

Mushfiquur Rahim totally missed the line of a Parnell delivery and was trapped leg before on eleven.

However, South Africa had some concerns after Parnell left the field due to a hamstring injury in his third over, leaving skipper Tendai Bavuma to chip in with his medium pacers. Afif Hossain was the only visiting batsman who showed quality, continuing his form from the Afghanistan series as he scored an unbeaten 72.

The left-hander was involved in two crucial partnerships yesterday. The first was a 60-run sixth-wicket stand with Mahmudullah Riyad and the second an 86-run seventh-wicket partnership with Mehedi Hasan Miraz, who added 38 off 49 balls.

22-year-old Afif registered his second ODI fifty before being dismissed after facing 107 deliveries. He hit nine fours.

Bangladesh will have to come up with a better approach and game plan to tackle the pace and bounce from the Proteas pacers in the series-deciding encounter on Wednesday.

‘Could have applied ourselves better’

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh skipper Tamim Iqbal mentioned their lack of application on such an 'uneven' track at The Wanderers Stadium was the main reason behind their seven-wicket loss to hosts South Africa, who levelled the three-match series 1-1.

"The wicket was not what we expected. Pace and bounce we can take it, but uneven you can't," said Tamim at the post-match presentation ceremony.

Bangladesh top-order was dismantled by the pace and bounce of Kagiso Rabada and Lungi Ngidi as four of Tigers' first five batters -- Tamim, Liton Das, Shakib Al Hasan and Yasir Ali -- were undone by rising deliveries directed at their bodies.

Asked if the decision to bat first after winning the toss impacted the outcome, Tamim said they relied on the stats.

"We have never played here before. So we went with the stats and the stats suggested that teams batting first win more matches [at the Wanderers]. We can make a lot of comments about winning toss and bat or bowl. At the end of the day, we can blame a lot of things but we played poorly. I think we could have applied ourselves better. Sometimes things don't go your way," added Tamim.

Tamim, however, credited the character shown by two youngsters -- Afif Hossain (72 off 107) and Mehedi Hasan Miraz (38 off 49) -- to help Bangladesh recover from a slump. The duo strung together a crucial 86-run stand for the seventh wicket.

"At one point, scoring 100 runs was looking difficult. Afif played a good innings and Miraz again came through. There were some positives to take away," Tamim said.



Bangladesh retain AHF Cup title

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh retained the title of the AHF Cup with a 5-3 win over Oman in penalty shootout after regulation time of the final match ended in a 1-1 draw at the Gelora Bung Karno Hockey field in Jakarta yesterday.

Forward Pushkor Khisha Mimo converted the fifth penalty to send the men in red and green into wild celebration as Bangladesh ensured their fourth consecutive title of Asia's second-tier hockey competition.

Goalkeeper Biplob Kujur played a crucial role to force Oman's Shamaiaa Bait Mahmood to send his shot wide after Oman had successfully converted the first three shots.

Apart from Mimo, Farhad Ahmed Shitul, Shonanur Rahman Sabuj, Roman Sarker and Nayeem Uddin converted their penalty shots successfully as Oman hit back in the game after Bangladesh surrendered their lead.

Bangladesh took the lead in the 14th minute when Sabuj changed direction of a fierce hit from Reazul Karim but the lead lasted only five minutes as Oman scored in the same fashion, with Fahad Al Lawati flicking home a fierce hit from Rashad Al Farazi.

‘Can’t explain this feeling’

Pak, Aus vie for series win

REUTERS

Pakistan and Australia head into a winner-take-all third and final Test from Monday as Test cricket returns to Lahore's Gaddafi Stadium for the first time since the 2009 attack by gunmen on a bus carrying the Sri Lankan cricket team.

Top teams have largely shunned Pakistan since the attack that killed six policemen and two civilians with Australia visiting the country for the first time in 24 years.

The Test will also be a first for Pakistan captain Babar Azam in his home city. "It's a different feeling to play in front of a home crowd, at my home ground. I can't explain this feeling," Babar told reporters on Sunday, adding that it will be a proud moment for the country and his team if they can win the series.

Babar's epic 196 and Mohammad Rizwan's gallant century helped the hosts snatch draw from the jaws of defeat in the second test in Karachi after the opening match also ended in a stalemate in Rawalpindi.

"We took a lot of confidence from the way the team played the last test," Babar said. "We will take that confidence into the final Test and we will be playing to win, that will be our mindset."

Both Babar and his Australian counterpart Pat Cummins said they did not expect the Gaddafi Stadium pitch to be much different from the first two tests.

"There's not a lot of grass on it," Cummins said. "I think it's had quite a lot of traffic throughout the PSL (Pakistan Super League) on it as well."



SET TO FLY: Bangladesh footballers set off during a practice session at the Bashundhara Kings Arena on Sunday ahead of their FIFA Friendly against Maldives in Male on March 24. The men in red and green, who started their three-day training camp on Saturday, will leave for the island nation on Tuesday.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Hosts storm into semis

SPORTS REPORTER

Hosts Bangladesh confirmed their semifinal berth in the 2nd Bangabandhu Cup International Kabaddi tournament following an emphatic 56-21 points victory over lowly Malaysia in a Group A encounter at the Shaheed Noor Hossain Volleyball Stadium yesterday.

The men in red and green bundled Malaysia out for five times to turn the match into a one-way traffic. Led by skipper Tuhin Taralder, the hosts established their superiority in the first half with a lead of 26-15 points before securing 30 points in the second half.

Razib Ahmed of Bangladesh was named man of the match for his all-round performance.

The defending champions, who overwhelmed England 46-25 in their opening match, will play their third match of group stages today against Sri Lanka, who advanced to the semifinals with a match in hand.