

Scores in brief (Day 4)

BANGLADESH: First Innings -- 365 all out and Second Innings -- 34 for 4 in 13 overs (Joy 15, Mushfiqur 14 not out, Liton 1 not out; Asitha 2-12, Rajitha 1-12)
SRI LANKA: First Innings -- 506 all out in 165.1 overs (Mathews 145 not out, Chandimal 124, Karunaratne 80; Shakib Al Hasan 5-96, Ebadot Hossain 4-148)



Bangladesh captain Mominul Haque, who scored 24 runs in his last seven innings, walks back to the pavilion after cutting another sorry figure on the fourth day of the second Test in Mirpur yesterday as Bangladesh were reeling at 34-4 at stumps, trailing by 107 runs. Earlier, the twin tons from the two experienced batters-- Angelo Mathews and Dinesh Chandimal-- gave Sri Lanka a massive lead of 141.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Shakib awaits difficult day

SPORTS REPORTER

"Not only me, all six batters need to perform because, given the situation, they will definitely attack and we need to survive the first hour and not lose wickets before lunch. Then we certainly have a chance. The game is not over until it's over," Bangladesh's ace all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan said during a press conference yesterday.

As the in-form duo of Liton Das and Mushfiqur Rahim were returning to the dugout yesterday after scraping through to close of play with Bangladesh having lost four top-order batters, Shakib came out to bat to some throwdowns at the touchline. Perhaps he was getting a feel of the situation, with the Tigers facing a really difficult task of saving the game, still trailing by 107 runs ahead of the fifth day's play.

Shakib listed all remaining batters, but the task of saving the game will fall squarely on the shoulders of the two batters in the middle, followed by him and Mosaddek Hossain. If Bangladesh are to have a chance, not losing wickets in the first session will be crucial. Shakib was gathering hope and courage and said that being able to cope with pressure was what made Test cricket special to him.

"In these situations, it's important to stay very calm. Nervousness will be there, fear too. It's important to handle

this kind of pressure. That's the fun of Test cricket.

"As far as the team is concerned, batting for three hours instead of scoring a century will be more helpful for the team," he said.

Following the first-innings debacle that saw them slump to 24 for five before Liton and Mushfiqur's rescue act, Bangladesh once again saw their top-order terrorised. Test batting has indeed been difficult over the years and after South Africa, the trend of losing wickets in a flurry continued.

Shakib was harbouring hope that Liton and Mushfiqur could do something similar to the first innings.

"When two batsmen get set in this wicket, removing them is quite difficult. If you see their front-line pacers, they can have spells of maximum five to six overs. Before lunch, they can bowl a maximum of 10 to 20 overs. If we can survive that threat, life will be easy for us because the bowlers will be tired, the ball will be old and the batsmen will be set," he said.

The southpaw added that Bangladesh were still lacking the application and mentality to see out the tough situations that arise in Tests.

"It's difficult for top-order batters in this situation. We haven't been able to handle that pressure and Bangladesh has been facing this problem for a while. We have failed in second innings

in the recent past. There was room for improvement and we failed today as well.

"I don't know...maybe mentally these situations are tough," he said.

"I feel those who are batting will bat till lunch and before lunch. If more than one wicket falls, it will be difficult so the lunch time is important," he added regarding the situation.

Bangladesh's bowling, with four specialist front-line bowlers and Mosaddek, was below par and that saw the match go into Sri Lanka's hand.

Shakib bagged a fifer while Ebadot showed up with four wickets late on but both Angelo Mathews and Dinesh Chandimal's tons made Bangladesh toil on the field. The mental resilience to then bat against Lankans' pace attack became a very difficult task.

"When they didn't lose wickets at lunch, it became apparent that things were becoming difficult and that they would overcome our lead. Our application is not good [with bat] and compared to their pacers, our pacers didn't bowl enough in good areas."

Shakib also pondered why Bangladesh lose focus when nearing the end of a Test series. "We sometimes worry about failure. But if we thought the opposite, it might be better," he concluded as Bangladesh hope all the remaining batters turn up.



Before yesterday's five-wicket haul against Sri Lanka, the last time Shakib Al Hasan bagged a fifer in Bangladesh was in 2017. It was during the Tigers' historic Test win against Australia in Mirpur in which Shakib bagged fifers in each of the innings and also scored 84 runs in the first innings. Shakib Al Hasan's last five-wicket haul in Test was against West Indies in Kingston in 2018. Even though Bangladesh lost that game, Shakib ended with impressive figures of six for 33 in 17 overs.

Cabrera hopes for competitive show

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh coach Javier Cabrera promised nothing more than a competitive showing in the upcoming Asian Cup Qualifiers after the national football team was decimated by injuries to eight top players in their 23-member squad.

The team was scheduled to fly for Indonesia in the early hours of today ahead of their international friendly against Indonesia on June 1. They will then travel to Kuala Lumpur ahead of the start of their Group E fixtures. The other teams in their group are Bahrain, Turkmenistan and hosts Malaysia.

Cabrera did not hide behind the fact that top players like Tapu Barman, Tareq Raihan Kazi, Masuk Mia Jonny, Suman Reza, Matin Mia, Saad Uddin and Hemanta Vincent Biswas will be missing through injury while Nabib Newaj Jibon will serve out a suspension.

At the same time, he did not promise good results. He only said their aim was to be competitive.

"I am not thinking of something magical. I think we have to be focused on ourselves every single day, every single training. I am not talking about matches. That's the way we want



to compete against the higher-ranked teams [in the Asian Cup]. We need to fight for every single action, every minute and every training session," Cabrera said at a press conference yesterday.

"The match against Indonesia is a preparatory game. For us, Indonesia fits very well with what we are going to face [in the Asian Cup Qualifiers] in Malaysia. The match is going to be like a probe. We will use it to gauge whether we are going to be ready to develop our game plan in Malaysia.

Our main objective is to prove that we can compete against Indonesia. That's going to be a great boost for us ahead of Malaysia," added Cabrera, who has overseen two national team games. Bangladesh suffered a 0-2 defeat to Maldives in the first before playing out a goalless draw against Mongolia.

Captain Jamal Bhuiyan was optimistic after new players, such as Papon Singh and Sazzad Hossain, had joined the team and trained together for 10 days.

"Of course, the players missing from the squad are big names in our domestic competitions. But those who are coming into the squad will give more than a hundred per cent effort. I believe the new players can also make difference in the team," said Jamal.

"We were able to understand his concept and how we have to play, how we have to press, how we have to defend and how we want to attack. The last 10 days have been very good for both senior and new players. So, it has been very good camp and we all are looking forward to the game against Indonesia. Afterwards we will talk about Qualifiers," said Jamal.

'It is truly special'

REUTERS, Tirana

An emotional Jose Mourinho celebrated what he called an historic achievement having become the second manager to win five major European titles after Giovanni Trapattoni as his AS Roma side clinched the Europa Conference League on Wednesday.

Mourinho, who had previously won the Champions League, Europa League and the UEFA Cup, completed a unique European trophy haul as Roma beat Feyenoord 1-0 in Tirana to ensure he could add the inaugural Conference League to his collection.

That is five European finals for Porto, Inter Milan, Manchester United and Roma since 2003 that Mourinho has coached in and five times he has taken home the trophy.

"The great thing about my career is that, aside from the Europa League with Manchester United, doing it with Porto, Inter and Roma is very, very, very special," Mourinho said.

"It is one thing to win when everyone expects it, when you made the investments to win, but it's quite another to win when something feels

immortal, that feels truly special.

"This remains in the history of Roma, but also mine. I was told only I, Sir Alex (Ferguson) and Giovanni Trapattoni won trophies in three different decades. It makes me feel a little old, but it's nice for my career."

It represented a fine end to his first season in the Italian capital for Mourinho, having steered his side to a sixth-placed finish in Serie A this term.

The Portuguese has no plans to seek new challenges, as he is already looking to next season with the club.

"Now I am staying, there are no doubts," Mourinho added. "Even if some rumours emerge, I only want to remain at Roma."

"We must understand what our owners, who are fantastic people, want to do next season, because this is history, but we can build a really strong project with honest professionals."

"Of course I feel like a Romanista, but that might be my way of working. I am a Porto fan, an Inter fan, a Chelsea fan, I am crazy about Real Madrid, I am now a Roma fan, I belong to all those clubs because we had these moments together."



Maradona tribute plane unveiled

REUTERS, Buenos Aires

An aeroplane dedicated to Argentine great Diego Maradona was unveiled on Wednesday ahead of a journey that will end at the World Cup in Qatar later this year.

The Tango D10S - a 12-seater financed by an Argentine fintech company - is designed as a flying museum in tribute to the former World Cup winner, who died of a heart attack in November 2020.

It features a picture of Maradona kissing the World Cup trophy on the fuselage, while his face is also on the tail.

The wings feature both of his goals from Argentina's 2-1 victory over England in the

1986 World Cup quarter-final: the 'Hand of God' goal on the left wing and the winner, a goal widely regarded as the greatest of all time, on the right.

"I am mad about Maradona, one of those people who still watch videos of Diego before I go to sleep at night," Gaston Kolker, CEO of fintech company Give and Get, told Reuters.

"This is the first World Cup without Maradona and maybe the last with (Lionel) Messi. I said, I want to make Diego's plane, I want to make Diego's plane. And so we launched Tango D10S."

"When Maradona's team mates saw it, the World Cup winners from 1986, they were amazed, they were hypnotized by the aircraft,"

Kolker said at an unveiling with other members from that World Cup winning side.

The plan is to fly the plane around Argentina and eventually to Qatar for the World Cup in November.

Fans will be able to board the aircraft and leave a message for Maradona in the cockpit, 'interact' with the late player through artificial intelligence, and see memorabilia from him and others players from the 1986 team.

It will also be available for private hire before being auctioned for charity.

"We can't believe or understand this craziness, the love involved," Maradona's daughter Dalma said. "How far will fans go? As far as a plane."