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SPORT

‘Not the Roach factor, it’s our vulnerability against movement’

SPORTS REPORTER

West Indies quick Kumar Roach was once again the tormentor-in-chief against Bangladesh in Antigua. The 33-year-old right-arm paceman made a last-minute entry to the playing eleven after passing a fitness test and ultimately made a big impact with a match haul of seven wickets, six of which were those of Bangladesh’s top-order batters.

If we look at Roach’s records against Bangladesh – 41 wickets in 10 Tests – a question might come to someone’s mind: Why Bangladesh batters have repeatedly struggled against the veteran pacer?

Rather than pointing to the ‘Roach factor’, former Bangladesh captain turned selector Habibur Bashar said it is the batters’ apparent frailty against pace and movement as the main reason behind the continuous batting meltdowns.

“You have to praise Roach for his brilliant effort. But it’s not only the Roach factor rather any sort of movement apparently creates anxiety among our top-order batters. A little bit of seam, swing and even turn for spinners can confuse most of our batters,” opined Bashar.

To back his claim, Bashar also reminded how the same batters succumbed to South Africa’s spin duo of Simon Harmer and Keshav Maharaj in the away series in March-April and surrendered to Sri Lankan pace duo Asitha Fernando Kasun Rajitha at home in the recent Test series.

“We are not good against spin away from home and interestingly, we struggled against pace at our home. So how can we say that one pace bowler turned a demon for us? It’s very difficult to find the exact answer to why our batters failed to cope with minimum movement from the pitch,” Bashar added.

ROACH’S RECORD AGAINST BANGLADESH



West Indies pacer Kumar Roach has scalped 41 wickets in 10 Tests at 19.60 average against Bangladesh. Roach bagged 36 wickets in six home Tests, 12 of those in the two Tests in Antigua. His career-best Test figures of six for 48 came against Bangladesh in Grenada in 2009.

Roach mentioned during a post-match discussion with the commentators that he made the green patches on the surface do the work for him, something that Bashar thought could have been neutralised if the batters were able to stick to the basics.

“See, Roach kept things very simple and tight. But our batters could not do the simple things to avoid the mistakes of the past. If you just go through the pattern of dismissals in recent Tests, you will find a lot of similarities and [Najmul Hossain] Shanto is the best example of it,” said Bashar.

Roach informed that he focused on his skill development when he realised he could not generate as much pace as he did at the start of his career and Bashar wondered whether the Bangladesh batters worked to hone their skills.

“When you continue to repeat the mistakes, you wonder if the batters did their homework. It’s very important for any player to analyse his game but most of our batters’ approach hardly indicated that,” Bashar added.

Maybe it is time for Bangladesh top-order batters to take a leaf out of Roach’s operating manual, stated clearly in a statement he made: “I love my stats. I look at my stats every night. Even if I am not playing.”

PRIME MINISTER STRESSES ON RURAL SPORTS

UNB, DHAKA

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on Sunday said that it is essential to put more emphasis on the country’s rural sports. The premier was addressing a reception accorded to the 2021 SAFF Champion Bangladesh Under-19 Women National Football Team at her office in the city.

Noting that her government introduced the Bangabandhu Gold Cup and Bangamata Begum Fazilatunnesa Mujib Gold Cup at the primary school level, she emphasized on arrangement of inter-college and inter-university competitions to pick players for the national teams.

“I think inter-school and inter-college competitions should be started soon. We’ll do everything what is necessary for this,” she said.



Hasina said her government is constructing a mini-stadium in every upazila for development of all types of sports. The construction works of mini-stadiums continue in 186 upazilas, she said.

She directed the sports ministry to come up with a fresh project to construct the mini-stadiums in other upazilas. “I don’t want the delay (in construction of the mini-stadiums). I want the mini-stadiums ready in 493 Upazilas”, she said.

The PM urged the industrialists and businesspeople to come forward in helping the players and thus promote sports.

“It is not right that you would just do business, set up industries and make money. You will have to do something for the country,” said the prime minister. In the function, the financial honorariums were provided to a total of 88

sportspersons, including 33 members of the team.

The 55 other sportspersons include 33 from ‘Mujib Borsho FIFA International Football Series 2020 and 22 from Bangabandhu 4-Nation Physically Challenged Cricket Tournament 2022.

SAFF-2021 Champion Women U-19 National Football Team’s Captain Maria Manda, player Monika Chakma and chief trainer Golam Rabbani Choto, Bangladesh Physically Challenged Cricket Team Captain Faisal Khan and Bangladesh National Football Team Captain Jamal Bhuyan received cheque of financial honorariums from the prime minister.

State Minister for Youth and Sports Zahid Ahsan Russel and Bangladesh Football Federation President Kazi Salahuddin also spoke at the function.

Hurkacz brushes aside MEDVEDEV

World number one Daniil Medvedev lost his second straight ATP grass-court final when he was brushed aside by Poland’s Hubert Hurkacz in Halle on Sunday. Medvedev had few answers as he crashed to defeat inside 64 minutes as Hurkacz offered no respite in a 6-1, 6-4 victory.



“[The toss] of course played a significant part. That said, we needed to apply ourselves better. Going into lunch six wickets down wasn’t a good thing. That first session killed the match for us. We have been having a lot of collapses and it doesn’t help the bowlers. All of the bowlers bowled their heart out. Nurul (Hasan) showed a lot of character. I was quite positive while batting and I wasn’t thinking what the ball would do. If it was there to be hit, I did.”

Shakib Al Hasan

“I thought Bangladesh bowled well. We batted more than 100 overs which was quite good as well. Roach bowled well. Roach is a champion and he adds a lot to the team. It (the win) motivates us to push ourselves more. Very pleasing to see Campbell get a half-century. He has good ability.”

Kraigg Brathwaite



Bangladesh captain Shakib Al Hasan congratulates two overnight West Indies batters Jermaine Blackwood and John Campbell, who took 26 minutes on the fourth morning of the first Test to confirm a seven-wicket win at the Vivian Richards Cricket Stadium in Antigua yesterday.

PHOTO:AFP

‘We missed out on an opportunity’

SPORTS REPORTER

Captain Shakib Al Hasan said all Bangladesh batters have got some technical flaws and the visitors need to display a combined effort to change their fortune in Test format as Bangladesh faced a comprehensive seven-wicket defeat over West Indies in the first of the two-match Test series in Antigua yesterday.

Bangladesh were bundled out for just 103 in the first innings and batting remained the main area of concern for the Tigers in the second innings as well.

On five occasions in their last five Tests, Bangladesh lost their top five batters inside fifty or less runs on the board. According to Shakib, it is not just about the mental aspect but the technical flaws need to be rectified quickly in order to change the fortune of his side.

“There are a lot of technical problems and I think we don’t have many technically sound players in our team. Everyone has got some technical flaws and they have to find a way on how to score runs and stay in the crease, which is very important,” Shakib told the media after the game yesterday.

According to the Tigers new Test captain, the first hour of the first innings was crucial as the visitors were never able to come back since then. However, Shakib also finds some positives as he praised the bowling department and urged the batters to give something for the bowlers to fight

SCORES IN BRIEF (1ST TEST)

WEST INDIES vs BANGLADESH
BANGLADESH: First Innings -- 103 all out and Second Innings -- 245 all out (Shakib 63, Nurul 64, Joy 42; Roach 5-53, Joseph 3-55)
West Indies: First Innings -- 265 all out and Second Innings -- 88 for 3 (Campbell 58 not out, Blackwood 26 not out; Khaled 3-27, Shakib 0-3)
Result: West Indies won by 7 wickets
Player-of-the-match: Kumar Roach

for. “But overall I am happy with the overall game as I won’t say there were higher expectations than that. I think we had the ability to do something good and we missed out on an opportunity,” he said.

The question was there for Shakib, who scored fifties in both the innings, on how to work on the technical aspects of the batters. Shakib said that it’s the coaches’ job and rather he would want to stick to his own responsibility and urged others to play their roles properly.

The 35-year-old also stated that despite the poor show from all the batters the Tigers were not far behind and a tally of 500-550 runs in two innings could have helped the visitors become more competitive in the match.

Meanwhile, Mominul Haque continued his poor form and the left-hander was dismissed on naught and four in the two innings and the question was there on whether Mominul needed a mental break in the second Test. Shakib replied, “It’s hard for me to say but the thing is I always talk with him and will have it again and if he [Mominul Haque] thinks he needs a break, that can happen.

“But we have just finished a game, so it won’t be a good thing to come to a decision now. Since we have a couple of days before we start training in St Lucia, we may be able to think about what should be done for the betterment of our team.”

U-23 int’l volleyball tourney in October

SPORTS REPORTER

With an aim of giving promising players international exposure and strengthening the senior national volleyball team, Bangladesh Volleyball Federation (BVF) is going to organise Bangabandhu Asian (U-23) Central Zone International Volleyball Championship in Dhaka in October this year.

“We have found some potential young players similar to star players such as Horosit and Rajesh and others and we are thinking of giving them international exposure before they represent the national team. That’s the reason for organising Bangabandhu Asian U-23 Central Zone Championship,” BVF general secretary Ashiquzzaman Miku told The Daily Star yesterday.

He added that the U-23 competition is part of Asian Central Zone activities.

BVF chief executive Sohel Mohammad Moin informed that the central zone committee of Asian Volleyball Confederation has already given approval for hosting the tournament in the first week of October.

“Even though we have already got the permission to host the tournament, we haven’t invited any nation yet as we are trying to increase the number of participants from nine to 14.

South and Central Asian Zone consists of two tiers of 14 nations – first tier with five nations and the second tier with nine nations including Bangladesh. We are trying to hold the tournament with all nations,” Moin said.

He also informed that the training camp will start after the Eid-ul-Azha vacation under long-serving Iranian coach Alipour Aroji.

Aroji, who is scheduled to arrive in Dhaka on July 1, will also guide the U-20 national team in the CVC Championship in Bahrain in August.

Nissanka helps SL cruise past Aus

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lanka went 2-1 up on Sunday as they cruised to a six-wicket victory over Australia in the third one-day international thanks to a brilliant Pathum Nissanka century.

Set a tricky 292 to win after a Travis Head 70, the hosts won comfortably with nine balls to spare in Colombo, in their second straight victory in the five-match series.

Maxwell bowled Niroshan Dickwella for 25 but Nissanka and Kusal Mendis ground down the injury-depleted Australian attack of Josh Hazlewood, Jhye Richardson and Matthew Kuhnemann.

Mendis retired hurt unbeaten on 87 and was replaced by Dhananjaya de Silva who made 25, but Nissanka clung on until almost the end, caught off Richardson for 137 off 147 balls.

Richardson then bowled captain Dasun Shanaka for a duck, but Charith Asalanka – with an ice-cold six in the penultimate over off Hazlewood – and Chamika Karunaratne saw Sri Lanka home.

Earlier Australia braved a spin onslaught by Sri Lanka to reach 291-6 in their 50 overs after being invited to bat first.

Vandersay ended with figures of 3 for 49. Already missing Marcus Stoinis, Kane Richardson and Mitchell Starc, Australia left out Steve Smith after the batsman injured his left quad batting in Thursday’s 26-run defeat in Pallekele.