



Wasim's wisdom in high demand

SPORTS REPORTER from Dubai

Pakistan's former pacer, the legendary Wasim Akram, is doing commentary work with the broadcasters of the Asia Cup tournament.

Many of the legendary players of the 80s or 90s are working alongside him, with Wasim's partner in crime during the late 90s in Waqar Younis also commenting. India's Ravi Shastri and Sanjay Manjrekar are there too and such faces live up the media centre -- known as the Sky box -- in the ongoing tournament.

But it is hard to get a soundbite from Wasim due to his busy commentary schedule although he often asks 'how's it going' while passing through the press box.

On a particularly hot day, this reporter found the Sultan of swing after he finished his pitch side routine before the toss of the India and Pakistan the Super Four stage game.

While discussing the people he met during his visits to Bangladesh, Wasim said: "I haven't been to Bangladesh in 20 years so I don't remember a lot of the people I met."



"It's a very enjoyable place to be though and I have many good friends over there," the former Pakistan captain said before he left as per his commentary schedule.

Wasim's persona shines through as a pure cricketing legend in this Asia Cup. Even though he is commentating on matches, his opinion is valued by those in the game.

Yesterday, it was Chris Silverwood and a few of the Sri Lanka team management that were seen discussing things with Wasim as he walked out to the pitch for a look.

There were a few gestures when talking to a pacer, perhaps indicative of something related to seam and swing. The Pakistan players were going through the warm-up motions just a few yards away.

Once Wasim said goodbye to the Sri Lanka contingent, it was a few members of the Pakistan team management who held council with him.

Mohammad Yousuf, Pakistan's batting coach, was listening carefully to what his former captain had to say just an hour before the match. Wherever Wasim goes, he keeps blazing a trail.



Sri Lanka players gesture to the cameras after taking a wicket against Pakistan during their last Super Four match of the Asia Cup against Pakistan at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium on Friday.

PHOTO: ACC

Finishers' impact growing

ABDULLAH AL MEHDI FROM DUBAI

When it comes to death over bowling, the 2022 Asia Cup has seen pretty sub-par performances from a few bowlers. Pakistan's Harris Rauf and India's Arshdeep Singh have been the most reliable names in the tournament, but in general, runs have been leaked and the biggest boost it has given is to batters who played the role of finisher in the T20 event.

Mohammad Nawaz, Khushdil Shah and Asif Ali, Sri Lanka's Bhanuka Rajapaksa and Dasun Shanaka, India's Hardik Pandya, Suryakumar Yadav and even Bangladesh's Mosaddek Hossain are amongst batters with the highest strike-rate this tournament and their knocks have had an impact that led to their sides taking control in crucial stages of the game.

Add to that the fact that batting second has been the tried and tested methodology of winning games this tournament, the finisher's role

has been even more prominent in Dubai and Sharjah.

Take into consideration that Bangladesh's pace duo of Mohammad Saifuddin and Mustafizur Rahman consistently failed to put in yorkers and would often bank on length deliveries.

That allowed batters like Afghanistan's Najibullah Zadran to play a shot best described as akin to a back-handed badminton slap.

He told The Daily Star that it was a shot he had never tried before, so one can get a pretty clear idea of the carnage at the death in this tournament.

Rajapaksa and Shanaka would take advantage of Mustafizur's lack of yorkers at the death to win a crucial group stage game and knock Bangladesh out of the tournament.

India's Virat Kohli's returned to his classy best on Thursday as he recorded his first-ever T20 ton during a game that saw Afghan bowlers like Fazalhaq Farooqi and

Fareed Ahmad fail to find the right length at the death.

Amongst batters with at least 20 deliveries faced, Mosaddek (180), Asif (178.26), Najibullah (171.42) and Nawaj (167.8) make up the top four with the highest strike-rates.

Rajapaksa and Shanaka have 150 and 144 and have gotten important runs while Shadab Khan was one of Pakistan's key weapons against Afghanistan in the Super Four stage.

The likes of Shaheen Shah Afridi or Mohammad Wasim were missed by Pakistan while India had Hardik Pandya, a good finisher with the bat but a part-time bowler at the death.

Sri Lanka's Lahiru Kumara and Dushmantha Chameera were missing in action too and that saw the finishers' role make further impact.

In the final, the battle of landing yorkers and the finishers' impact could once again be the difference maker.

Naseem to auction six-hitting bat

AGENCIES

Naseem Shah is auctioning the bat he used to smash two sixes and win the Asia Cup match against Afghanistan for flood relief.

On Thursday, the PCB shared a video of Shah and Muhammad Hasnain announcing that the bat will be auctioned off for a good cause. In the brief video clip, Hasnain said "By now you know about the inning played by Naseem, which he played outstandingly and led Pakistan to victory by repeating the time when Javed Miandad hit a sixer and this time it was our Naseem, our shehzada [prince], our tiger. So this bat that he played with last night was mine and now I'm gifting it to him so he can do whatever he wants with it."

After taking the bat from Hasnain, Shah thanked him and added that he would like to auction the bat. He said that half of the proceeds will be given to the people affected by floods in Pakistan.

Oval Test resumes today

REUTERS, LONDON

England's third and deciding Test against South Africa at The Oval will resume on Saturday after the second day was postponed on Friday following the death of Queen Elizabeth.

"Cricket will resume on Saturday to pay tribute to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and honour her remarkable life and service," the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) said.

The opening day was washed out by rain on Thursday and there will be no extra day tagged on, meaning that the series decider is effectively now a three-day test.

"We have been in discussions with Cricket South Africa but they have to fly home on Tuesday to spend a few days at home before heading to India and Australia," the ECB said.

"Tomorrow (Saturday) is therefore confirmed as day three of a five-day Test Match."

Domestic and recreational cricket matches will also go ahead as planned at the weekend in line with Official National Mourning guidance and England women's Twenty20 against India will also be played on Saturday.



Bangladesh women's football team, currently in Kathmandu for the SAFF Women's Championship, pose for a photograph with retired Australian cricketer Brett Lee, who was staying at the same hotel during a stopover at the Nepalese capital.

PHOTO: FACEBOOK

'We want to play natural game and win'

SPORTS REPORTER

Following an expected winning start in the SAFF Women's Championship 2022 as Bangladesh handed an emphatic 3-0 defeat to Maldives, the women in red and green appear determined to successfully pass their forthcoming hurdle against Pakistan in Nepal at 1:30pm BST today.

Before departing for Kathmandu, Bangladesh had expressed their desire to progress match by match to confirm their semi-final berth first -- before facing India in group's last match -- and today they will definitely be hoping to book a spot in the semi-finals with back-to-back victories in the tournament.

Bangladesh and Pakistan have never faced each other in the previous five editions of the regional women's tournament, or in any international match for that matter. At the age-level competitions in 2018 SAFF Championships, Bangladesh U-18s had beaten their Pakistani counterparts by an outrageous

score-line of 17-0 -- a game in which striker Sirat Jahan Swapna netted as many as 7 goals.

The charges of Golam Rabbani Choton, though, can anticipate a tough challenge from Pakistan -- who really showed their character despite suffering a 3-0 defeat to five-time champions India, considering the women in green arrived at the international circuit for the first time in eight years following suspension from FIFA.

"We know Pakistan have some good players, with two of their players from abroad," said Bangladesh defender Masura Parvin on Thursday after the Bangladesh squad went through a recovery session following their victory over Maldives.

"Whoever is the opponent, our target has always been to play competitive matches in a bid to show a point that the girls in Bangladesh are not behind at international level," Masura added.

Masura, who struck one of the three goals against Maldives, wants

to wait till the first 10 to 15 minutes to observe how Pakistan play and then decide on their strategy, similar to how Bangladesh had operated against Maldives.

Winger Sanjida Akhter said, "We have watched the India Pakistan game. We had got chances against Maldives, had we scored we would have got a bigger win."

As far as Bangladesh are concerned, their forwards need to maintain their composure upfront and convert their chances to arrive at their peak form against a strong Indian side. Sanjida further said that she is not bothered about scoring but instead wants to contribute to goals, so that Bangladesh achieve their desired result.

"I have no regrets for not getting a goal [against Maldives]. I set up one for Sabina [Khatun] apu, and that is what I'm happy with. As a winger, my job is to create goals for others."

"We've won the first match, now we want to play our natural game and win against Pakistan," Sanjida concluded.

ADMISSION ANNOUNCEMENT 2022-2023

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- Classes shall start on **10 October 2022**.
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FEES

- No tuition fees will be charged. However, a nominal amount of Taka 10,000 will be charged to cover incidental expenses.

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