

We're not sloggers, our team generally are good at playing that sort of aggressive cricket and they play with proper cricket shots a lot of the time. The guys do sometimes take the time and play the way they play and, it has just become natural. I think it's more the confidence of playing that way and not being afraid to get out playing a certain way.

England all-rounder
Moeen Ali



HIGHLIGHTS

- The two teams have faced each other 21 times in ODIs, with Bangladesh managing four wins and England recording 17 victories.
- Out of the 10 matches between the sides in Bangladesh, the Tigers have won two matches while finding themselves on the losing end on eight occasions.
- Shakib Al Hasan is six wickets away from becoming the first Bangladeshi bowler to take 300 wickets.
- Batting first, England have averaged a first innings total of 281 in their last 10 matches (home and away), with their highest tally being the 498 for seven posted against the Netherlands last year.



Bangladesh all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan is seen sharing his thoughts with chief curator Gamini de Silva while England speedster Jofra Archer was working on his variations for the tricky Mirpur pitch ahead of today's first ODI of the three-match series.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Jamal keen on Sol da Mayo move

SPORTS REPORTER



Bangladesh national team captain Jamal Bhuiyan may have played his last domestic match of the season on Tuesday when his side Sheikh Russel KC suffered a 5-4 defeat to Abahani in penalty shootout in the Federation Cup.

Jamal hit the headlines on

Monday after several Argentinian news portals reported that the Bangladesh captain was signed by Sol de Mayo, a third division club of the country, following the Bangladesh captain's courtesy meeting with visiting Argentine foreign minister Santiago Andres Cafiero.

Even though Jamal initially denied the report, he admitted to The Daily Star on Tuesday that he did get an offer from Sol de Mayo. However, his contract with Sheikh Russel is apparently a barrier in accepting the offer.

"It's a huge milestone for Bangladesh football and Bangladesh, also very historic [matter] in Bangladesh," Jamal told The Daily Star. "I want to go there and the club people from Argentina have come here because they are serious."

It has been learnt that Sheikh Russel management does not want to release Jamal in the middle of the season as, according to them, he is the best player among the locals.

"I will speak with them tomorrow (Wednesday) and request them to provide me with the release letter," said Jamal.

Jamal had previously played in Kolkata-based Mohammedan Sporting Club when the now defunct Saif SC allowed him to play in the I-League. Mohammedan later signed him in the mid-term window.

The domestic season will take a break now for a month or so to make way to the national team's international assignments.

'Captaincy brings the best out of me'

AFP, Indore

Australia's Steve Smith said Tuesday he was frustrated with his performances in India but confident his spell as stand-in skipper can revive the tourists' fortunes after two dismal losses.

Smith will lead Australia in the third Test starting Wednesday in Indore, after regular captain Pat Cummins left to be with his ill mother following the team's second successive defeat. India have retained the Border-Gavaskar Trophy with a 2-0 lead in the four-Test series.

Despite failing to match that form during this tour, he is hopeful his leadership can deliver a turnaround.

"It normally brings the best out of me," he said of the captaincy.

SPORTS REPORTER

It was an optional training session for the Tigers yesterday as they made their final preparations ahead of the first ODI against champions of both white-ball formats England. Seniors Shakib Al Hasan, Tamim Iqbal and Mushfiqur Rahim turned up for the nets session and, in the morning, Taijul Islam bowled at one of the wickets just beside the one to be used for the game today. The deliveries bounced quite a bit, providing some insight into what the wicket tomorrow may behave like. It may also be a ruse; a puzzle for England to work on before the game.

An official involved with the England team management asked this reporter while the team were training at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium turf: "Do you think it will be kind of low and spinning?". The interest in the wicket had been growing and England were apparently expecting it to be low and slow.

The official concerned seemed to suggest that it was an exciting prospect to be playing in the subcontinent, especially given the 2023 ODI World Cup will be staged in India. Spin is key here but given that wickets at ICC events tend to be sporting, it could be something different that England are served. Meanwhile, Taijul also batted at the nets today, lending credence to the idea of a three-pronged spin-attack alongside Shakib Al Hasan and Mehedi Hasan Miraz.

The presence of an England pace attack featuring Jofra Archer and Mark Wood must have made the Bangladesh team management think. Coach Chandika Hathurusingha said at the press conference that facing the faster bowlers would be a challenge.

"They have one of the best pace attacks in the world. They have five fast bowlers and three spinners on this tour. The challenge will be to play their fast bowlers in this series," he said.

For Bangladesh, Rehan Ahmed, Moeen Ali and Adil Rashid will also

pose challenges. If there is a wicket with bounce and spin, the prospect will be as difficult for Bangladesh as it will be for England.

"I don't think there will be many changes in the first two games. We have been successful. The combination depends on the pitch. There are no surprises other than that," Hathurusingha said about team combination. The choice between pacers Hasan Mahmud, Taskin Ahmed, Mustafizur Rahman and Ebadot Hossain will depend on the kind of surface.

The talk ahead of the series as far as Bangladesh were concerned surrounded the breakdown in the relationship between Tamim and Shakib that BCB president Nazmul Hassan had alluded to in an interview recently. While talking to Rob Keys, the managing director of the England cricket team, he felt such things can serve something different.

"Ahead of a series, sometimes all the talk is about batters' technique and stuff. So focusing on something like that can actually take the focus away from things

that you want focus to be away from. I read everything, but for the players, it's sometimes better not to read anything at all. But sometimes it's much worse to think about those [technical things] than reading something like that," he told The Daily Star.

Hathurusingha put it bluntly, saying his players "didn't need to be friends to go out and play as a team".

Meanwhile, the bounce present when Taijul bowled yesterday at the centre wickets could make England think differently. Moeen Ali recently played the BPL and, when asked to characterise the pitch for the first ODI, said: "I'm not sure. Obviously depends on how the groundsman has prepared the wicket over the last two weeks. But normally it's a very good wicket here."

Ruse or not, the wicket was England's headache ahead of the first ODI.

"We are playing full strength. I don't think they [England] have come with their full strength," Hathurusingha reminded yesterday.



Lionel Messi was named FIFA player of the year 2022 on Monday as Argentina scooped all major men's awards after winning a vintage World Cup final last December. "I want to express my thanks to (coach Lionel) Scaloni and my team mates, without them I would not be here. I achieved a dream I had been hoping for so long and finally I achieved it," said Messi. His compatriots Lionel Scaloni and Emiliano Martinez won the coach of the year and keeper of the year awards respectively, and their supporters even got the best fans prize, while England were rewarded for their victorious women's Euro 2022 campaign. PHOTO: TWITTER

NZ herald Wagner as architect of 'crazy' win

AGENCIES

New Zealand made history against England, becoming the first team in 22 years to win after being asked to follow on in a Test match, and only the fourth side in history to do so.

The stunning scenes in Wellington saw Tim Southee's side draw the series 1-1, leaving the Black Caps captain to jointly hold the trophy aloft with England's Ben Stokes.

New Zealand beat England by just one run in a second-Test thriller on Tuesday to draw the series in the most dramatic fashion in Wellington.

And to have produced a win in such stunning fashion is a 'special' moment for a cricketer who has experienced plenty of them.

The hero on the fifth day for New Zealand was Neil Wagner, who had been targeted for much of the two-match series by England's



batters.

The 36-year-old was smashed for 373 runs across the series at an economy rate of 5.68 over 65.4 overs.

But Wagner kept on coming, and it was the veteran who made the big final impression on the series with his short-pitched approach, taking four wickets on the last day to remove Ollie Pope, break the key partnership by dismissing both Ben Stokes and Joe Root, and then take the final match-winning wicket of James Anderson.

"We went back to what Wags' biggest strength is," Southee said. "He bought into it, he trusted it, even though it hadn't come off as he'd have liked in the series."

"We trusted his best method and he was able to come in and change the game in this last session."

"It's an unusual tactic that you see a little

bit more of nowadays, but it's something Neil's done for a long period of time. For him to come in and change the game there, when it looked like Ben and Joe had almost taken it away from us was a massive part of this game, and shows you the ticker that Neil's got."

"It shows more about him as a character and a cricketer. He doesn't give up. It's in his DNA to keep giving to this team. And I think we saw that and how valuable he can be: when nothing was really happening, and into the wind as well, he was able to change the game in that last session."

"I imagine it'll be a Test match that's talked about for a long time, Southee added."

England skipper Stokes was disappointed to have lost, as the attacking "Bazball" cricket under head coach Brendon McCullum hit the buffers, but happy to have played his part in the drama.

"Everyone's got their money's worth today. "What a game. It was crazy."

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