

**I don't think anyone talks much about Bumrah's bowling. He has an idea of what to do and what not to do.**



India all rounder  
AXAR PATEL

## Reserved approach misfires against Aussies

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh lacked vitality in the Powerplay against Australia yesterday when the chance came to bat first at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium, one of the best batting tracks on offer in the ongoing edition.

The top-order's rudderless performances throughout the group-stage was enough evidence for the team management to work out a different approach but they opted for one that did not work.

In what appeared to be at least a 160-170 wicket, Bangladesh looked past putting early pressure on Australia's bowling attack.

The first six overs produced just 39 runs for the loss of one wicket, with opener Liton Das blocking to keep his end locked. During his 25-ball stay, it appeared he was finding rhythm but then the inability to find scoring options, managing just 16 runs, saw him eventually throw his wicket against Adam Zampa.

Bangladesh had in fact wanted to keep wickets in hand for the last six overs of the innings but they couldn't manage to get the momentum they wanted as wickets fell frequently.

Towhid Hridoy hit an impactful 28-ball 40 but there was no support from



the other end from any other recognised batter.

When asked about the sluggish and negative approach in the Powerplay, skipper Najmul Hossain Shanto revealed that it was what the team had wanted.

"We had a plan to play carefully by being watchful at the beginning because we were not getting good starts in the previous matches," Shanto told reporters in the

post-match press conference.

"So, it was our plan to finish the first six overs by keeping wickets in hand which I think we were able to do. It could have been a little better but we were happy. I think, if I could have played a little more, till the 16-17th over, then we could have scored close to 160-170.

"I would also say that the wicket was a little slow in the beginning. It was not like

the ball was not coming to the bat, but as I said it was important to have a set batter."

Bangladesh's unconventional ploy was to use Rishad Hossain's pinch-hitting ability to take out Zampa but he perished to Glenn Maxwell after a four-ball stay. Thus, two quick wickets between the ninth and 10th overs saw the rate of run-scoring take a dip.

The middle-order too did not perform as expected with the wicket offering grip which led to the dismissals of Shakib Al Hasan and Mahmudullah Riyad.

Bangladesh failed to go full throttle at the death overs with, Hridoy the only spark during that phase.

Shanto finally managed to get a few runs but fell in the 13th over after a 36-ball 41 and Bangladesh lost all their momentum. The skipper himself was at a loss to explain why batters did not click.

"It is difficult to say why we were not able to play. I think everyone has the capability, people have played well in different places in the past. But I do not have an answer. Everyone has the freedom to play their natural game but somehow it is not happening," Shanto said.

Australia did exactly what the Tigers couldn't. They piled on the runs in the Powerplay at a brisk rate, showing where improvement is needed for the Tigers to challenge superior oppositions.

## Afghans FAIL Bumrah TEST

REUTERS, Barbados

Afghanistan coach Jonathan Trott was disappointed with the shot selection of his batters in their defeat by India in Thursday's T20 World Cup Super Eight match and said they failed to execute their plans for facing Jasprit Bumrah.

Bumrah was almost unplayable once again, India's pace spearhead claiming three Afghan wickets and conceding only seven runs in four impeccable overs at Kensington Oval.

Bumrah deceived Rahmanullah Gurbaz, Afghanistan's leading scorer in the tournament, with clever change of pace and got the better of the other opener, Hazratullah Zazai, with an off-cutter that resulted in a leading edge at point.

"Obviously disappointed with a few of the shots or the decision-making," Trott said after their 47-run loss in the Group 1 contest.

"Obviously, Bumrah is going to be a key bowler for any side. For India, he's crucial and we needed to play him better. His figures suggest we didn't play him very well.

"We'd obviously spoken about it and how we were going to play him. So, we weren't able to execute that and, yeah, that's very disappointing."

## Tigers lose impetus with 'bonus' mentality

SHABAB CHOWDHURY

A significant mismatch on paper was the theme for Bangladesh ahead of their T20 World Cup Super 8 fixture against Australia in St. Lucia and the Tigers could do very little to overturn the notion with their on-field display yesterday.

A lacklustre attitude, particularly with the bat, saw Bangladesh succumb to a 28-run defeat in DLS method against the 2021 winners but more than the result itself, it was the manner in which the Tigers approached the game that left the fans raising a toast to disappointment.

It won't be a stretch to presume that even the most ardent of fans would humbly expect to see Bangladesh produce fighting displays and moments of courage and go toe-to-toe against the top sides in Super 8s more than they would perhaps anticipate a positive result. But against the mighty Aussies, there was hardly any attitude shown that would suggest that the Tigers came to the ground looking for a fight.

Bangladesh gave their opposition all and maybe more respect than they were looking to get and it seemed like this particular group of Tigers was rather intimidated by the Kangaroos, so much so it induced a mental barrier because of which they forgot to prowl let alone go for the kill.

Fear loomed large and the idea of a lost battle encapsulated the Tigers' camp, especially on the batting front. On a good wicket, the Tigers laboured hard but only managed a paltry 140-8 and in reply, Australia raced off to 100-2 in 11.2 overs before rain prompted umpires to call for a result via the DLS method. Batting first,

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no batter other than Towhid Hridoy, who scored a 28-ball 40, looked to make a game out of the difficult situation Liton Das's 25-ball 16 had put the Tigers in and at no point could one say that the Aussies were forced to break a sweat or resort to any defensive measure.

The proactive body language and the attitude of hunting down oppositions for the desired victory -- features that were

evident in the lead-up to the Super 8s -- were lacking. The Tigers seemed to have used up all their aggression in making their way to the Super 8s and suffered from stage fright when they were due to take the big stage.

Bangladesh's performance was a prime example of what head coach Chandika Hathurusingha had said about the Super 8s being a bonus for the Tigers, underlining that the objective of qualifying for the second round had already been achieved.

Ironically, none of what Hathurusingha said had found a reflection in Bangladesh's performances. Most of his troops couldn't play with an ounce of freedom nor could they execute their roles.

Even the thunderous bowling that helped the Tigers win three matches in the group stage looked blunt. Starman Shakib Al Hasan continued to avoid bowling to left-handers as he did not bowl an over in the match. Meanwhile, vice-captain and lead pacer Taskin Ahmed's perennial habit of getting cold feet in ICC events has returned as his early tournament sizzle has all but worn off in the past two games. With in-form pacer Shoriful Islam, who is yet to feature in the tournament, raring to go, will the team management take a bold decision in this regard?

## Starc goes top

Australia pacer Mitchell Starc has become the most prolific wicket-taker in World Cup history, claiming his 95th wicket in World Cups -- ODI and T20 -- against Bangladesh in Antigua on Friday.

### MOST WICKETS IN WORLD CUPS

PLAYER	ODI WC	T20 WC	TOTAL
Mitchell Starc (Aus)	65	30	95
Lasith Malinga (SL)	56	38	94
Shakib Al Hasan (Ban)	43	49	92
Trent Boult (NZ)	53	34	87
Muttiah Muralitharan (SL)	68	11	79



## Spin key in crucial Australia-Afghanistan contest

STAR SPORTS DESK

The Australia-Afghanistan T20 World Cup Super Eight clash at the Arnos Vale Ground in Kingstown today is potentially a must-win contest for Rashid Khan and Co as a defeat will see the Afghans hoping for other outcomes going their way in order to qualify for the semis.

Meanwhile, Australia can ill-afford to slip up as they would be looking to further boost their chances of progressing from Group 1 following a 28-run win (DLS) in their first Super Eight fixture against Bangladesh in Antigua on Friday.

Another reason why the Aussies will be desperate to avoid an upset against Afghanistan is that Mitchell Marsh and Co will then be left with the prospect of confirming their semifinal spot through a win in a high-voltage final Super Eight game against India in St. Lucia on June 24.

Australia might have to tinker with their eleven for the game, considering they will be going against a spin-heavy Afghanistan on the spin-friendly wicket of Kingstown in St Vincent. In the three matches played at this venue so far in this World Cup, spinners have ruled the roost with 27 wickets against pacers' 17.

Australia are wary of the fact as pacer Pat Cummins mentioned that even taking the first hat-trick of the ongoing edition



– in their last game against Bangladesh – may not save him from the axe when Australia line-up against Afghanistan.

In order to bolster their spin prowess, any one of Cummins, Josh Hazlewood or Mitchell Starc – all of whom had started against Bangladesh – might have to sit out the game in favour of another spinner.

"Yes, potentially. We've been pretty open with that, that anyone in the squad's ready to play and the bowling line-up might change at different times," said Cummins who has played in three of his team's five games so far.

"It's got to be adaptable. We feel like we've got all bases covered. So yeah, we'll

rock up there. And I mean, the best thing of all this is I'm not captain or selector or anything, so I just turn up and have no worries."

The Aussies have not been afraid of chopping and changing according to the demands of the conditions in this World Cup. They played just one frontline fast bowler in the first-round win over Scotland with Adam Zampa, Glenn Maxwell and Ashton Agar providing spin options.

In the victory over England, Cummins, Starc, and Hazlewood all played just as they did against Bangladesh.

Starc sat out the match against Namibia with Cummins and Hazlewood getting the nod.

Meanwhile, Afghanistan will definitely be confident with the likes of Rashid, Noor Ahmad, and Mohammad Nabi providing them one of the most envious spin arsenals, but it is their batters who will need to crank it up a notch if they are to stun the 2021 T20 World Champions.

Afghanistan were bundled out for 114 and 134 in their big-margin losses to co-hosts West Indies and India in their previous two matches, respectively. Avoiding such batting mishaps will be key if Afghanistan are to put up a fight against the mighty Aussies.



## Had no idea about hat-trick feat: Cummins

AGENCIES

Pat Cummins created history in Antigua on Thursday when he became just the second Australian player and seventh overall to claim a hat-trick in an ICC Men's T20 World Cup match on Friday.

Cummins picked up two wickets from the final two deliveries of his third over against Bangladesh and then completed the feat with the opening ball of his last over when he had Towhid Hridoy caught at short fine leg, helping Australia to a 28-run win (DLS) in a Super Eight fixture in Antigua.

It meant Cummins joined compatriot Brett Lee as Australian bowlers to have taken a hat-trick at a Men's T20 World Cup, after the legendary right-arm achieved the feat against Bangladesh in 2007.

After the match, Player of the Match Cummins said, "I had no idea (regarding the hat-trick), then saw when it came up on the screen.

PHOTO: AFP