

Tigers need Mominul to score big

SHABAB CHOWDHURY

Amid Bangladesh's continued top-order failure in Test cricket in recent times, one character that might have escaped wide scrutiny is Mominul Haque, who these days bats at number four position – one of the two most crucial batting positions in Test cricket.

Mominul's runs, particularly the big knocks, have always been vital to Bangladesh's cause as evidenced by the impact of his centuries. Out of the 12 tons he has scored in the format so far, 10 of those saw Bangladesh either nick a draw or clinch a win, with the only loss coming against the West Indies in 2021 when the left-hander's 115 was trumped by Kyle Mayers's double century in Chattogram. Bangladesh's top four – all left-handers – put on a sorry show against India in



the first Test in Chennai as it was yet another batting meltdown, starting at the top, that plunged them to a 280-run defeat. Mominul was a key figure in that failure as he registered a golden duck and 13 in the match. He got castled in both innings; Akash Deep angled one in to break through the gap between Mominul's bat and pad – almost

identically to how he got bowled against Khurram Shahzad in Pakistan in the previous series – while Ravichandran Ashwin bowled a ripper from the same angle to take his off-stump in the second.

The 32-year-old batter, who made his Test debut in 2013, used to boast a batting average of beyond 50 in the early years of his career and subsequently became one of the pillars of the batting unit of Bangladesh. He could keep up that envious average for the first three years of his career, till 2016 that is, and since then

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it has regressed significantly (to 37.78) largely owing to a lack of consistency.

Then comes the home versus away debate with Mominul. As backed by his stats, Mominul averages just 25.29 in away Tests – a stark contrast to the 48.57 average at home. Of the 12 tons he has scored, only one came away from home (in Sri Lanka).

Mominul's recent struggles can be attributed to subtle technical issues,

predominantly his head position and his bat-lift. In his early years, the direction of his bat-lift used to be aligned more with the wicket-keeper or at best the first slip which would allow him to have a steadier head position and in turn help with swinging his bat with a straighter face. But in recent years, his bat-lift has been more directed towards the wider slips, perhaps to give him more access to wider areas of the field and establish a broader stroke range, which however has made him a prime candidate for lbws and bowled-outs. He cocks his bat at a wider angle now (towards third man) which destabilises his head position. This does not always allow him to cover the line of the ball, especially when bowlers are trying to get him out from around the wicket, and hence he loses his bearings, becoming susceptible to lbws as well as bowled-outs.

In his last 17 innings since 2023, Mominul's percentage of lbw and bowled dismissals was roughly 43 percent, whereas the figure was 31 percent in the 102 innings prior, giving a percentage rise of 39.

Heading into the second Test in Kanpur, starting from September 27, it is of no doubt where India will be looking to target Mominul. And for Bangladesh to put up a fight, it will be vital for Mominul to do justice to his pedigree as a Test batter.

Shanto & Co reach Kanpur

SPORTS REPORTER

Amid security concerns and the prospect of being greeted to a slower and lower pitch than the Chennai surface, the Bangladesh national team, along with the Indian side, arrived in Kanpur yesterday afternoon for their second Test starting Friday.

Bangladesh suffered a 280-run hammering at the hands of the hosts in Chennai in the first Test of the two-match series, part of the World Test Championship.

Looking to stage a comeback, the Najmul Hossain Shanto-led team could get a familiar surface at the Green Park stadium as per reports from a number of Indian media outlets.

According to reports in India, the surface at Kanpur's Green Park will have a covering of black soil, meaning there could be a lack of bounce in the surface – the type of wicket that is similar to what the Tigers play at home in Mirpur.

The change in conditions might play a role in the two sides' selection of their eleven for the game, with India having the option to give a nod to either leggie Kuldeep Yadav or left-arm spinner Axar Patel while Bangladesh could call in left-arm spinner Taijul Islam or off-spinner Nayeem Hasan.

Meanwhile, there have been security concerns regarding the game as multiple right-wing organisations have called to oppose the matches in Bangladesh's ongoing tour of India in protest of the alleged attacks against the Hindu community in Bangladesh.

Indian authorities have undertaken elaborate security arrangements amidst security threats ahead of Bangladesh's second Test against India in Kanpur, reports several Indian media.

Man Utd, Spurs eye respite in Europa League

AFP, Paris

Manchester United and Tottenham kick off their Europa League campaigns this week, hoping to put disappointing starts to the Premier League season behind them.

Erik ten Hag's United have failed to show any real improvement from a miserable season last term, sitting outside the top 10 already domestically with just seven points from five matches.

The Dutch manager narrowly clung on to his job despite leading the Old Trafford giants to their worst-ever Premier League finish of eighth last term, largely thanks to a surprise FA Cup final victory over Manchester City.

United spent heavily in the transfer market, but the expected upturn in fortunes on the pitch are yet to materialise ahead of their Europa League opener at home to Twente on Wednesday.

Man United are back in the revamped Europa League after a disastrous Champions League performance last season that saw the three-time European champions finish bottom of their group.

Anything other than a victory against Dutch



club Twente, back in the competition proper for the first time since 2012, in the first of their eight league-phase matches would pile the pressure on Ten Hag and his players.

Discontent has also started to grow among Tottenham fans for the first time since their blistering start to life under Ange Postecoglou 12 months ago.

A 3-1 victory over Brentford at the weekend at least helped them bounce back from successive Premier League defeats against Newcastle and Arsenal.

But Spurs will be desperate to end their 17-year wait for a major trophy and will see the new Europa League, which will not feature any teams dropping down from the Champions League like in previous seasons, as a golden opportunity.

They host Azeri club Qarabag on Thursday.

Elsewhere, crisis-hit Roma welcome Athletic Bilbao to the Stadio Olimpico, hoping to continue their strong recent form in Europe.

Other Europa League fixtures include 2022 winners Eintracht Frankfurt hosting Viktoria Plzen, while four-time European champions Ajax take on Besiktas in Amsterdam.

We have ‘all ingredients’ to go the distance

The Daily Star (DS): How have you adapted preparations after the T20 World Cup was shifted to UAE?

Hashan Tillakaratne (HT): It's very unfortunate that the venue has been changed from Bangladesh, but there are things you can't control. So, we must stay in a positive frame of mind. Playing in Sharjah, these wickets will definitely help us. It's all about believing in yourself and going out there to execute the plans.

DS: Do you think the experience of winning the qualifying tournament in 2022 in UAE will come in handy?

DS: Does the prospect of playing a relatively weaker opponent Scotland, and South Africa – beaten in their backyard last year – make you optimistic?

HT: All the teams are challenging. We can't take them lightly. Since I've been working with them for the last two years, I understand their mentality, skills, and everything. I'm sure we have all the ingredients, and the girls are very skilful. If they can play their 'A' game, we have a good chance because we've beaten South Africa in South Africa. There are a lot of



PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

women's cricket. For a 17 or 18-year-old to develop so rapidly in two years is really good for Bangladesh. She's risen in the WT20I rankings, which is another positive for us. We have a lot of confidence in her, and I'm sure she will do what's needed. Also, she's a very smart girl.

DS: What's your take on the overdependence on Nigar Sultana Joty's batting?

HT: Yes, we've spoken about this often with Nigar and the other six or seven batters about how they need to support her. As you correctly pointed out, we've been putting undue pressure on Nigar. That's why I've tried different combinations so they can take some pressure off her. There are a few combinations in place now, and I'm sure they understand their roles and will play accordingly.

DS: We largely have the same players who played in the last T20 World Cup in 2023. Do you think a few domestic tournaments, like the Women's DPL and NCL, are enough to produce ample players for the national team?

HT: The BCB has taken a very good initiative by starting a T20 tournament and also two-day cricket. We need to make these tournaments more challenging for our players and more competitive. I see a lot of talented players, but they need a proper pathway to represent the country.

DS: Having worked with Sri Lanka, how do you compare women's cricket in both nations?

HT: Sri Lanka has come a long way in women's cricket... It's the same here – our girls are coming through nicely. The path is there, and I'm sure it's the right time to get ROI (return on investment).

SHORT CORNER

Hamza one step away from playing for Bangladesh

Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) has sought final approval from FIFA to field England-born footballer Hamza Chowdhury as a Bangladesh player after getting a No-Objection Certificate from the England Football Association last week. "We have already applied to FIFA for the final approval for Hamza Chowdhury and our application is supposed to be placed before the players' status committee, subject to the availability of all related documents," BFF general secretary Emran Hossain told reporters yesterday.

India take Bangladesh to SAFF U-17 semis

Bangladesh moved into the semifinals of the SAFF U-17 Championship after India notched up an emphatic 3-0 win over Maldives in the final Group A match at Changlimithang Stadium in Thimphu, Bhutan yesterday. India emerged group champions with six points from two matches while Bangladesh finished group runners-up by virtue of goal difference as both Bangladesh and Maldives secured one point each from two matches.

Sabalenka chases year-end No.1 ranking

Aryna Sabalenka said Tuesday that she wants to cap off a stellar year by returning to the top of the world rankings. The world number two is the top seed at the China Open this week following the withdrawal of top-ranked Iga Swiatek, the defending champion, because of undisclosed "personal matters".

Read full stories on The Daily Star's website.



Director - Operation and Maintenance

Last date of application: 23 October 2024

Number of position: 1

Academic qualifications: Master's with B.Sc. in Electrical/ Mechanical Engineering Degree from a recognized university

Age: Ideally 40 – 50 years.

Experience: At least 15 (fifteen) years of experience in operation & maintenance of big campuses/ hospitals/ hotels/ commercial buildings/ factory complex, etc. and minimum 5 years of management experience as Director / Chief Engineer.

Assistant Director, Office of External Affairs

Last date of application: 23 October 2024

Number of position: 1

Academic qualifications: Master's degree preferably in MBA with at least 2nd Class/CGPA 3 out of 4.

Age: Not exceeding 40 years.

Experience: Experience of working in a higher education setting or with international organizations.

Department Secretary, School of Health & Life Sciences

Last date of application: 23 October 2024

Number of position: 1

Academic qualifications: Master's degree with at least 2nd class or CGPA 3 out of 4 from any reputed university.

Age: Ideally 25 – 30 years.

Experience: Candidates should have at least 2 to 3 years of practical experience in any large organization/ educational institute.

Coordination Officer, Office of External Affairs

Last date of application: 23 October 2024

Number of position: 1

Academic qualifications: Master's degree with at least 2nd Class/CGPA 3 out of 4.

Age: Not exceeding 32 years.

Experience: 2 to 3 years in a relevant field.

Web Master, Office of Information Technology (IT)

Last date of application: 23 October 2024

Number of position: 1

Age: Not exceeding 35 years.

Academic qualifications: Master's degree with B.Sc. in Computer Science/ Computer Science & Engineering/ Software Engineering at a recognized university from home or abroad would get the preference.

Experience: At least 3 year(s).

IT Officer, Office of Information Technology (IT)

Last date of application: 23 October 2024

Number of position: 1

Academic qualifications: Master's degree with B.Sc. in Computer Science/ Computer Science & Engineering/ Electrical Engineering or a related field at a recognized university from home or abroad would get the preference.

Age: Not exceeding 35 years.

Experience: 5 years working experience in the relevant field.

Lab Instructor (CSE and EEE), Department of ECE

Last date of application: 23 October 2024

Number of position: 12

Academic qualifications: Bachelor's degree in a relevant discipline (CSE & EEE) with good standing (CGPA 3.5 and above) from a well-recognized university.

Experience: Not required, but laboratory experience will be given preference.

Assistant Lab Officer, Department of ECE

Last date of application: 23 October 2024

Number of position: 4

Academic qualifications: Bachelor's degree in relevant discipline/lab with good standing (CGPA 3.0 and above) from a well-recognized university.

Experience: Not required; but experience(s) of working in relevant labs will be given preference.

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