



Bumrah rewrites script for ‘special’ India triumph

🔴 The 295-run win was India’s largest margin of victory against Australia away from home in terms of runs, surpassing their 222-run triumph in Melbourne back in 1977.

🔴 In the overall contests between these two nations, it was the second biggest Test win (in terms of runs) after the Mohali Test (2008), when India had won by 320 runs.

🔴 The emphatic victory was only India’s second in Perth and first since their triumph at the WACA Ground back in 2008.

🔴 Jasprit Bumrah became only the second captain from Asia to lead his team to a Test win against Australia in Perth – after Anil Kumble (2008).

🔴 The victory propelled India to the top of the World Test Championship standings with a points percentage of 61.11, while Australia dropped to second place with 57.69.

🔴 The last time Australia won a home series after losing the opening Test was 55 years ago against West Indies.

“I thought he [Jasprit Bumrah] bowled really well. He’s one of the best in the world. He’s always going to be a challenge, so we got to come up with ways to combat that. He bowled well through the game, like he does most games.”



Australia captain Pat Cummins

AGENCIES

India overcame an unpromising start to thrash Australia by 295 runs in the first Test at Perth Stadium on Monday, laying down the gauntlet for the rest of the series and putting to bed any question marks about their form.

Stand-in skipper Jasprit Bumrah led from the front with 3-42, named player-of-the-match after earlier picking up 5-30, as India wrapped up the comprehensive win well inside four days to take a 1-0 lead in the five-game series.

Set a mountainous 534 for victory, the world’s top-ranked Test team crumbled to 238 all out in the final session on day four.

“Obviously, a special win, my first win as captain, I’m very happy with that and more happy with the performance of the team. We were put under pressure and showed character,” Bumrah told reporters after the match.

“Whenever tough scenarios come, I ask myself ‘how I can contribute?’ We’re a new side so I wanted to put myself in tough scenarios when we needed to do something, to make the job a bit easier for the new guys coming in.”

It was an astonishing turnaround for India, who arrived in Australia on the back of a humiliating 3-0 home series defeat to New Zealand.

Given little hope of defending the

Border-Gavaskar Trophy they have held since 2017, they now head to the second day-night Test in Adelaide next week with a big psychological advantage and boosted by the return of skipper Rohit Sharma.

Under Bumrah’s makeshift captaincy, India dominated an ageing side which is now the one facing scrutiny after failing to fire.

Out for a dismal 104 in reply to India’s first-innings 150, the hosts’ bowling attack then had no reply to a brilliant 161 from impressive young opener Yashasvi Jaiswal and an unbeaten 100 from Virat Kohli.

Bumrah bowled magnificently throughout the match on a surface that was all fizz and bounce on day one when

17 wickets fell but turned into a lifeless road that defied Australia’s bowlers for the best part of two days.

Bumrah, who will now hand the reins back to new-dad Rohit Sharma, however Bumrah warned his India side against complacency after their emphatic victory.

“But it was here, Adelaide might be totally different, it’s a pink ball.

“So yes, you can take the confidence from here, but again, you have to start from zero. You have to build on from confidence. You have to take learnings from this game.

“And there were learnings for us in this game, so we’re going to take it in our stride and put our best foot forward.”

Sinner completes year to remember

AFP, Malaga

Jannik Sinner led Italy to a successful defence of the Davis Cup with victory over the Netherlands in the final on Sunday, as the world number one eased to a 7-6 (7/2), 6-2 triumph against Tallon Griekspoor for the winning point. Sinner thus ends 2024 with titles at the Australian Open, US Open and the ATP Finals. Italy, meanwhile, became the first team to defend the title since the Czech Republic in 2013, and the fifth nation to win it along with the Billie Jean King Cup in the same season.

Batters show grit, but work remains

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh’s Test batting performances across the year left plenty of room for concern ahead of the ongoing first Test against the West Indies in Antigua. Yet, the Tigers showed resilience, battling through 98 overs with one wicket still standing at the close of day three on Sunday.

Remarkably, barring the two Tests against Pakistan in Rawalpindi – leading to Bangladesh’s only series win this year – this marks only the seventh instance in previous 15 innings where they have lasted at least 50 overs.

Across the four innings against South Africa in the last series, they played 50 overs just once, indicating the challenges the batting unit has faced in the Test circuit.

Thus, without Mushfiquur Rahim, Najmul Hossain Shanto, and Shakib Al Hasan, it took a big effort from the rest of the line-up to negotiate the searing pace of Alzarri Joseph, Jayden Seales, and company.

Mominul Haque led the way with a fifty off 116 deliveries. He and Liton Das put on 62 for the fourth-wicket stand. Before that, Mominul ensured the Dukes ball lost some shine, contributing to a 45-run stand off 129 deliveries with Shahadat Hossain Dipu.

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Rana resurfaces after two-year hiatus

SAMSUL AREFIN KHAN

Once a bright prospect for the national team, left-arm pacer Mehedi Hasan Rana, who rose to prominence with his stellar performances in the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) in 2019, had been absent in first-class cricket for 25 months.

His struggles began just a day before the last National Cricket League (NCL) season, when the 27-year-old fractured his hand, forcing him to miss the first-class competition and the subsequent Bangladesh Cricket League.

After regaining fitness, Rana was signed by BPL’s Fortune Barishal, who eventually won the title. However, he did not get a chance to play due to team composition.

Reflecting on his struggles, Rana admitted, “I blame myself for not performing in the 2023 BPL for Chattogram Challengers,” referring to his earlier success in the 2019-20 BPL, where he bagged 18 wickets for Chattogram Challengers.

He followed that season with 11 wickets in eight matches for Fortune Barishal, who were runners-up that year.

Meanwhile, in the last Dhaka Premier Division Cricket League in April this year, he got only one match for Legends of Ruggani, who relied more on pacers like Abdul Halim, Al-Amin Hossain, and Mashrafe bin Mortaza. As a result, Rana, along with Sumon Khan, spent most of the season on the bench.

“I was unlucky last season,” Rana told The

Daily Star after claiming 5-65 for Khulna Division against his former side, Chattogram Division, in the first innings in Sylhet in the sixth-round match of the ongoing NCL.

Rana’s return to the field was far from easy. Initially drafted into the Chattogram squad, he had to secure an NOC from the management before finally joining Khulna to feature in his first first-class match since October 2022.

“I was out of red-ball cricket for the last two years... I felt I might not get a chance to play for Chattogram this season,” he said.

Rana also faced challenging days in 2022 when Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) banned him for a month after he made “unacceptable” comments about a national selector on his Facebook page.

Rana now says he has moved past the incident and is focused on reviving his career. “I don’t think the selectors have kept these [previous misconducts] in their minds,” he said.

“I have always tried to remain fit... After the Premier League, I worked with [Mohammad] Salahuddin sir at the MASCO for three months. I was waiting for my turn to come, and it finally arrived.

“I have been in regular communication with Hannan [Sarkar] bhai... He wished me good luck to perform well here,” said Rana, who, however, is yet to secure a BPL team for the upcoming season and also remains uncertain about being picked in Barishal’s final squad for the NCL T20.

Kane in focus as Bayern host PSG

Bayern Munich host PSG on Tuesday in a battle between two sides flying high domestically but seemingly struggling to adjust to the new Champions League format. After four games, Bayern have lost twice and sit 17th, which would leave them unseeded for the knockout phase play-off. PSG’s situation is even worse, with the French champions in 25th – one spot outside the knockout places entirely. Both teams, however, lead their leagues by six points.

- Harry Kane will be the dangerman against PSG as the English striker will be looking to add to the 20 goals he has scored in all competitions this season. His hatrick on the weekend against Augsburg saw him become the fastest to 50 Bundesliga goals
- Bayern have won each of their last three games against PSG in the Champions League, played between 2021 and 2023.
- Hansi Flick’s Barcelona will be aiming for their fourth consecutive win in Europe when they welcome Brest as the knockout phases start to take shape. A high-flying Barca were stopped in its track in LaLiga by Real Sociedad and were denied a win by Celta Vigo on the weekends but the Catalans still remain top in the league and will look to put a stop to their mini-slide. Brest, placed fourth on the table, are one of five teams who are yet to taste defeat so far in the Champions League.
- Crisis has struck out of the blues in Manchester as the positivity from the contract extension of Manchester City boss Pep Guardiola was punctured on Saturday with a 4-0 thrashing at the hand of Tottenham Hotspurs which handed Guardiola a fifth straight defeat for first time in his managerial career. The Citizens, currently on 10th in Europe, will be hoping to get their mojo back when they host Feyenoord who are 21st on the table.
- London rivals Arsenal, on the other hand, will face a steep challenge as they will go to Sporting Lisbon, the Portuguese champions who managed to slay 4-1 City on matchday four.

JR ASIA CUP HOCKEY ‘Final at the beginning’ for Bangladesh

SPORTS REPORTER

Keeping sights on a spot in next year’s Junior World Cup, Bangladesh are looking to make a winning start in the Junior Asia Cup against Oman in ‘the final at the beginning’ in Muscat today.

Bangladesh have been placed in Pool B alongside Pakistan, Malaysia, China and Oman, with six out of total 10 teams advancing into the Junior World Cup, which will be held in India in 2025.

The opening match is crucial for Bangladesh to finish either third or fourth in the pool in a bid to staying in race. Bangladesh had beaten Oman beat 7-6 in shootout to emerge champions in the AHF Qualifiers earlier this. The men in red and green have also beaten the same opposition five times in last three Junior Asia Cups.

“For us, it is like a final match at the beginning of the tournament because we want to finish either third or fourth in the pool,” head coach Moududur Rahman Shuvo told The Daily Star over phone from Oman yesterday.

Under Shuvo’s guidance, Bangladesh trained for nearly two-and-a-half months at BKSP but did not get to play any practice matches.

The team played a 30-minute practice match against Korea on Sunday, going down 2-1.

“The practice match was important because we needed to get introduced to the new turf under floodlights and the players now know how the turf will behave. I think the team is in good shape and ready to fight,” said Shuvo.

SHORT CORNER

Fizz, Rishad unsold in IPL auction

Bangladesh pacer Mustafizur Rahman went unsold in the auction of the Indian Premier League in Jeddah yesterday. The Fizz, priced at INR 2 crores, was the first Bangladesh player to be called up on the second day of the auction but no franchise showed interest to rope in the left-arm pacer. Leg-spinner Rishad Hossain, who has a base price of INR 75 lakhs, suffered the same fate. Ten other Bangladesh players were not called up to the auction. Mustafizur was the only Bangladesh cricketer to get picked in the last edition’s auction. He played nine matches for the Chennai Super Kings, taking 14 wickets at an economy rate of 9.26.

Sylhet on verge of maiden NCL title

Sylhet Division are on the verge of winning their maiden National Cricket League title as they need 105 runs to win their sixth-round match against Barishal Division on the final day at the Sylhet International Cricket Stadium today. If Sylhet win the contest, they will have at least 37 points, 12 more than second-placed Dhaka Division and will clinch the title with one match to spare. According to tournament rules, a team can earn a maximum of nine points from a single fixture – eight points for winning the contest and one extra if the win is either by 10 wickets or an innings margin.

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