

Zaheer was at his best

31st January 2010, Sunil Gavaskar

India's win over Bangladesh may have been a foregone conclusion even before they set foot on Bangladesh soil, but it was an exercise that was needed as they prepare to take on the No. 2 Test team in the world for what is unofficially the fight for the World Championship of Test cricket. India have won the World Championship of Cricket way back in 1985 which was a One-Day tournament and the silver jubilee of that event is due on March 10 this year. Hopefully it will also be celebrated as joyously as the silver jubilee of the 1983 World Cup was a couple of years back.

India needed to beat Bangladesh comprehensively to be in the right frame of mind to take on the Proteas and they have done that. Yes, there was a bit of a hiccup in the first innings of the first Test, but after that India pretty much held sway and Bangladesh got in the game only for half a session or so after that first-day collapse in the first Test.

It is never a bad thing for a wakeup call to be given when a team is sleeping through a session or so and that was just what the doctor ordered for Indian cricket. The batting, as expected, was too formidable for the Bangla bowlers, who, to their credit, gave it everything and kept coming back at the Indians. There were thus no easy runs even if the attack wasn't challenging enough.



Apart from Sehwag who looked at the bowling as net practice and so didn't get his customary big hundreds, the other batsmen feasted on the attack and got tons.

Sehwag still got two half centuries and a forty, so it wasn't a bad outing for him. Dravid, Gambhir got a century each and Tendulkar got two, the first of which saved India from embarrassment and gave them some total to fight back.

It is here that no praise can be too high for the Indian bowlers who had to toil on lifeless pitches but still came up trumps. Ishant looked good as he ran in smoothly and Zaheer was the brains behind the demolition of the Bangla batting. He bowled with fire and caused huge problems for the batsmen by using the crease very well. By switching between over and round the wicket he also created angles that the batsmen struggled with.

His tally in the two Test series and his ten wicket haul in the second Test was seam bowling at its best. He is the CEAT International Cricketer of this Week.