



Afghanistan defeats Zimbabwe in the series after Rashid's career-best performance.

Zimbabwe 243 (Ervine 75, Raza 61, Rashid 4-94) and 205 (Ervine 53, Rashid 7-66, Zia 2-44) were defeated by 72 runs against Afghanistan 157 (Rashid 25, Raza 3-30, Nyamhuri 3-42) and 363 (Rahmat 139, Alam 101, Muzarabani 6-95).



Rashid Khan had to be the one. He was the standout of Afghanistan's last three Test victories in Dehradun, Chattogram, and Abu Dhabi. In Bulawayo, he dominated Zimbabwe with a match total of 11 for 160. Expectations of an exciting conclusion were dashed just 15 deliveries into the final morning, including career-best figures of 7 for 66 in the second innings. Craig Ervine was Zimbabwe's captain, and his team was 73 runs from winning. To end the match, Afghanistan needed two excellent balls.

However, there was enough drama in the brief play on the sixth day. Afghanistan got the day off to a perfect start when Rashid bowled to Richard Ngarava, Zimbabwe's number ten. Afghanistan nearly achieved their goal four balls into play. At silly moment, the ball appeared behind Rashid after Ngarava attempted to slice him. He shifted to his right and put Hashmatullah Shahidi at cover. At one point, Fareed Ahmad moved to his left.

Shahidi dropped Ngarava, his focus split between the dipping ball and the oncoming Fareed. Rashid was unable to contain his rage at his captain, who had extended both hands but the ball had never stuck. Ngarava lived, but not for very long.

To guarantee Ervine had the strike for the next over, Ngarava did play out the final two deliveries of the over. He had a wide field to work with because he was the final recognized batter and started with an overnight score of 53. Ervine declined two singles before deciding to take the third. Yamin Ahmadzai was only almost three-fourths of the way to the boundary when he was driven towards deep extra cover.

Chasing the ball forward, Shahidullah retrieved it and sent it flat to the wicketkeeper. Ngarava took off late, possibly not anticipating Ervine to try for the run so early in the over. With Ngarava miles short, wicketkeeper Afsar Zazai whipped the bails off, but Ervine was already well down the pitch.

Blessing Muzarabani, the last man, defended the following two deliveries while ignoring the third. Since Zimbabwe had not yet added to their overnight total, Ervine struck for the following over once more. Rashid pitched it substantially fuller the third time after going short for the opening two balls. Ervine botched a sweep attempt, and the ball landed just outside off, spun in, and hit him in front.

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Afghanistan thus departed Zimbabwe with a series victory in all three forms and won the two-match series 1-0 following a high-scoring tie in the first Test.