



Rashid Khan back in Afghanistan Test squad for Zimbabwe series



RASHID KHAN BACK IN AFGHANISTAN TEST SQUAD FOR ZIMBABWE SERIES

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Rashid Khan, Afghanistan's top spinner, has been selected for the forthcoming two-Test series in Zimbabwe and will play his first Test match in almost three years.

Due to a groin issue, Rashid had previously taken a medically advised break from the longest format. Rashid played his final Test match in March 2021 in Abu Dhabi, when he also faced

Zimbabwe.

All-rounder Ismat Alam, left-arm spinner Zahir Shehzad, and left-arm fast Bashir Ahmad Afghan are among the seven uncapped players in the team. The three will join Azmatullah Omarzai, Fareed Ahmad, Riaz Hassan, and Sediqullah Atal, who have also not yet represented Afghanistan in Test cricket, after being rewarded for their impressive domestic achievements. However, Riaz, Fareed, and Omarzai were all included in the squad for the one-time Test match against New Zealand earlier this year in September, which was wiped out without a ball being bowled.

"Rashid Khan's comeback to the Test team is encouraging for our red-ball game in the future," said ACB interim chief selector Ahmad Shah Sulimankhil in a statement. The rest of the team, which included 19 players and all the support personnel to work with the players and guarantee complete preparation for the series, recently completed excellent preparations in Nangarhar province.

After closely observing the events, we selected a team that comprises a number of fresh talent, such as Ismat Alam, Bashir Ahmad, and Zahir Shehzad, who all excelled in the most recent Ahmad Shah Abdali first-class competition.

Mohammad Ibrahim, Zia Ur Rehman, and Nasir Jamal will join the team as backups in the interim.

The head coach of Afghanistan, Jonathan Trott, who oversaw the ODI portion of the team's multi-format tour of Zimbabwe, has withdrawn from further tour formats due to personal reasons. In Trott's absence, Hamid Hassan will take over as head coach and Nawroz Mangal as assistant coach. Rahmat Shah will serve as Hashmatullah Shahidi's deputy as the team's leader.

Both Test matches will take place in Bulawayo, where the series will take place from December 26 to January 6.

Afghanistan Test squad

Ikram Alikhail (wk), Afsar Zazai (wk), Hashmatullah Shahidi (capt), Rahmat Shah (vice-capt), Sediqullah Atal, Abdul Malik, Bahir Shah, Ismat Alam, Azmatullah Omarzai, Zahir Khan, Zia Ur Rehman, Zahir Shehzad, Rashid Khan, Yamin Ahmadzai, Bashir Ahmad, Naveed Zadran, Fareed Ahmad